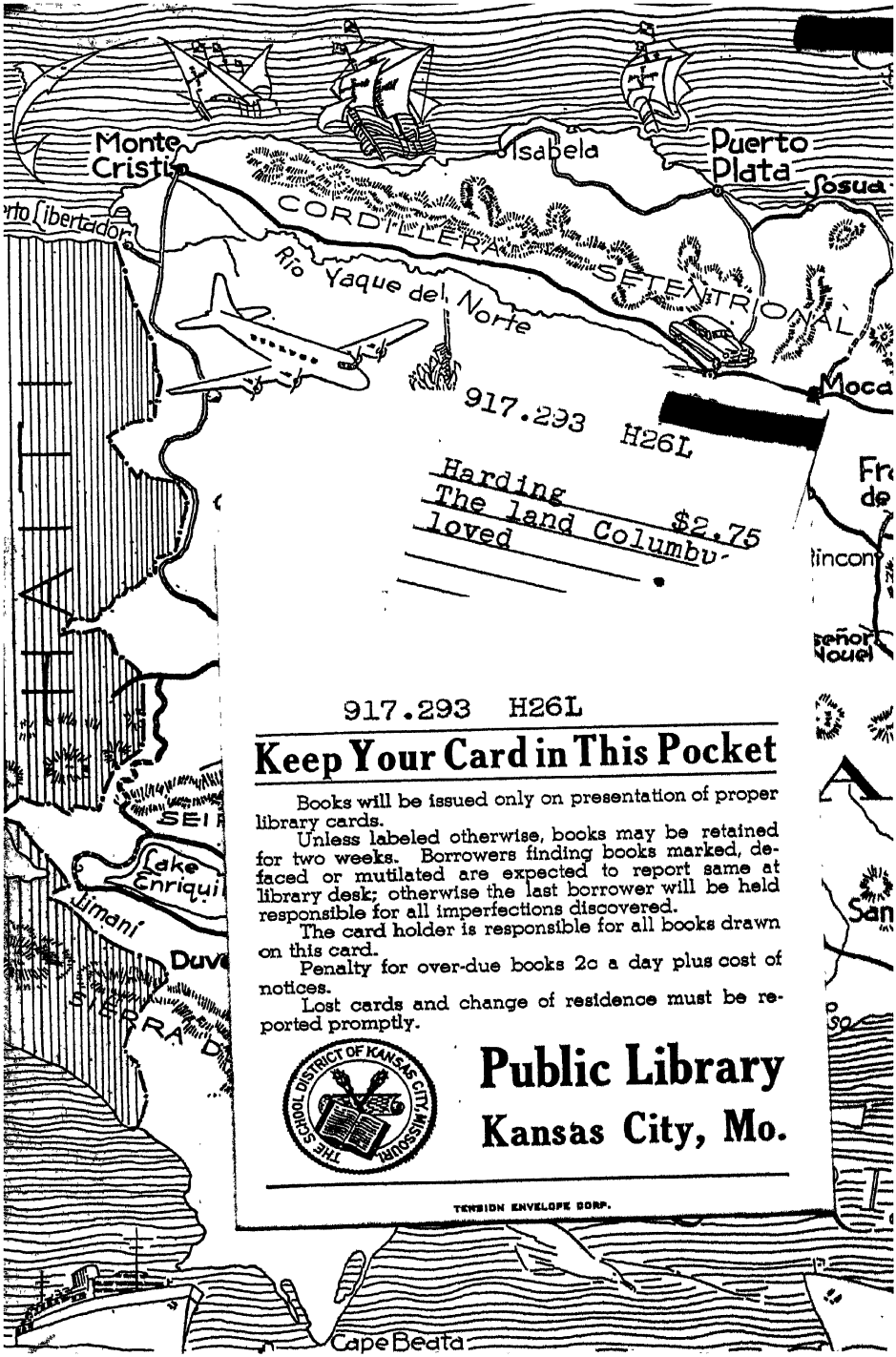

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The Land Columbus Loved

THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

By Bertita Harding

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The History

CHAPTER 1

DISCOVERY

THE morning of discovery is timeless.

Under the same limpid sky, in a blaze of sunshine, the implausibly blue waters of the Caribbean that once greeted Columbus roll in white-spumed surf against the island necklace off Florida, Yucatán, and Venezuela. To sail that turquoise sea, or to view it from aerial heights amid tufts of snow-white clouds, is to recapture an ineffable moment in humanity's procession: the white man's arrival in the Western World.

Naïvely it was called the New World, though civilizations existed here to match anything the better-known continents had to offer. The name America created the illusion of a hemisphere's birth, though actually only a phase is marked thereby upon an ancient continent's calendar. The arrival of Columbus did not bring to life a new continent; it raised the curtain upon a great drama, the American Age, to be staged against an old but hitherto unexplored backdrop.

Known by three names, the English Christopher Columbus, the Italian Cristoforo Colombo, and the Spanish Cristóbal Colón, the illustrious discoverer has paled into a cardboard figure. Schoolroom repetition has rendered his breathtaking exploits hackneyed and lifeless. But to one who sets foot on the island of La Española and from its northern shore looks out into the vast Atlantic, the miracle takes form. From a point called La Isabela, on the northern, Atlantic side of the Republic of Santo Domingo, the dawn of the American dream is reflected in each new sunrise. For here, where Columbus built his first city, the ocean breeze still seems to catch itself in the

sails of the *Pinta,* the *Niña,* and the *Santa María,* while the shadow of the navigator hovers over an empty beach.

Of this first settlement only the trace of a wall is left, and a stone marker erected by a Dominican historical society. The rest—the earth and sky and everlasting waves—remain unchanged. So it is with the person of Columbus. Of his human identity the outline remains, but his work rises in eminence upon the world theater of our time.

What do we know of him? He was born in 1451 at Genoa, as the son of a poor Spanish weaver by the prophetic name of Domenico. Following his father's trade, he served his apprenticeship at Savona and thence embarked on commercial voyages to various Mediterranean ports. On a more extended trip with wares for England the ship he sailed on was attacked by buccaneers near Cape St. Vincent and forced to take refuge at Lisbon. Having no funds to return home, he remained in Portugal and, in 1478, married a merchant's daughter, Felipa Moniz Perestrello. A son, Diego, the only child of this marriage, was born in 1480.

Wedlock and fatherhood did not bind Christopher to the hearth. He had tasted adventure on the high seas, and his eyes had fixed on far horizons. To Felipa's sorrow he hired himself out as a sailor and made several journeys to the coast of Guinea, taking oceanic measurements off equatorial Africa and speculating on new sea routes to Asiatic markets.

Obsessed by a bold idea of sailing westward across the Atlantic, the young man approached King João II of Portugal with an outline of his scheme. He hoped for financial support to carry out the project, but the King's purse strings did not open easily, particularly where foreigners were concerned. Instead, João II listened carefully and resolved to dispatch navigators of his own along the sea routes proposed by the unknown petitioner. If a short cut to the Indies was possible, let the glory of its discovery accrue to Portugal!

Knowledge of the monarch's duplicity reached Christopher at the same time that Felipa fell mortally ill; her death, a short

week later, embittered him against all things Portuguese. In 1485 he took his small son and left for Spain, where he placed Diego in the care of the monastic brotherhood of La Rábida, while he himself went on to Seville and the palace of the benevolent dukes of Medina-Sidonia and Medina-Celi. These two gentlemen listened to the seaman's schemes and facilitated an audience with the Spanish rulers, Ferdinand and Isabella, at Córdoba, following which a commission of scholars gathered at Salamanca to examine Christopher's pretensions.

Academic minds moved slowly, hence the impatient sailor was left to cool his heels at Córdoba. He filled the time of waiting with amorous dalliance, becoming entangled with a high-born lady named Beatriz Enríquez de Araña, who in 1488 gave birth to their son, Ferdinand. This brought increased financial obligations, which Columbus met by selling books and hand-made maps. But he soon tired of the delays caused by the Salamanca savants and decided to offer his services to King Louis VIII of France. Picking up Diego at La Rábida, he set out for the border.

It was now that Ferdinand and Isabella bestirred themselves and summoned him back to the celebrated conferences at Santa Fé in Granada. Christopher came, but anger gave him the nerve to raise the stakes. Spain could engage his services in return for a peerage, the office of admiral, and the title of viceroy over whatever lands and islands he might discover. Titles and offices were to be made hereditary, though he magnanimously declined investiture until his bold claims of discovery were actually fulfilled. For the present he demanded only three ships, 120 men, clothing, provisions, merchandise for trading, and "a little artillery." There was some protest and haranguing, but Christopher mentioned France a second time and won the day. Rather than lose out to Louis VIII, the Spanish rulers dredged up the requested honors and funds. The expedition was launched from Palos on August 3, 1492.

After a short stay in the Canary Islands the travelers sailed on from Gomera on September 6, but by the end of the month

there was talk of mutiny among more skeptical members of the crew. Early in October, after 750 leagues had been traversed, open revolt broke out; Christopher quieted his men and eased their fears. Under his firm will they continued forward and, on October 12, sighted the first speck of land, the tiny islet of Guanahani (now Watling's Island in the Bahamas) which they renamed San Salvador in honor of the Holy Saviour. Realizing that this could not be the Kingdom of Cypangu (Japan) they cruised on and came upon the large land mass of Cuba, where a landing was made on October 28. Here again topographic measurements did not agree with what was known of the real Cypangu, hence the search continued. On November 22 the mountainous island of Quisqueya (Mother of All Lands), known also as Haiti (High Place), was sighted, and Columbus made a tentative stop on the turtle-shaped rock of La Tortuga. From this point he crossed to the island proper on December 5 and named it La Española, taking possession of this and all surrounding lands in the name of King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Aragón and Castilla. As the occasion of this ceremony coincided with his father's birthday, and the discovery itself fell on a Sunday (in Spanish, Domingo), he gave to the island an additional name, Saint Dominic or Santo Domingo.

To supplement the meager data contained in the navigator's ancient logbook, La Española is situated between parallels 19°58′ and 17°36′ north of the equator, and between meridians 68°18′ and 74°50′ west of Greenwich, in the center of the Antilles or West Indian island group, nine hundred miles southeast of Miami, between Cuba and Puerto Rico. Its total surface measures 29,829 square miles or approximately twice that of Switzerland. From Isabella in the north to Cape Beata in the south it is 167 miles, and from Cape Irois in the west to Engano at the eastern tip, 410 miles. The climate, nicely balanced by equatorial trade winds, surprised Columbus with its temperate character. Except for Alpine chills on the mountain peaks, an average temperature of 77 degrees Fahrenheit prevails, with scarcely 10 degrees' change between summer and winter.

In this sun-drenched land lived a native population of some two million Indians, a blend of Arawak, Carib, Maya, and Seminole strains. Though individually these tribes were warlike and fearsome, their condition on the island had been happy and devoid of hardship, hence the violence of their natures had mellowed. They called themselves "Taínos" (The Good People), and gave proof of their friendly sentiments by showing the Spaniards a hospitable welcome. In the palm-thatched huts of native chieftains Columbus and his men had their first taste of tobacco.

The island was divided into five brother kingdoms or provinces: Marién, Jaragua, Maguana, Maguá, and Higüey. Each of these was ruled by a princely chieftain, respectively: Guacanagari, Bohechio, Caonabo, Guarionex, and Cayacoa.

Through sign language and the exchange of gifts the foreign visitors and their hosts made contact, but when the interplay of courtesies was at an end, the Spaniards made clear that they had come to stay. They backed up their statement with a few shots from the "little artillery" that Columbus had placed aboard his caravels with such foresight. Aided by this means of persuasion, the Admiral of the Ocean Seas (for Christopher now assumed his title) levied the first head tax in the Americas. From every Indian above fourteen years of age he exacted a quarterly payment of as much gold as would fill a church bell, or twenty-five pounds of cotton and an equal amount of cassava.

The natives were astounded and enraged. But the boom of cannon was like the voice of the storm god Huracán, whose fury burst upon them in periodic typhoons. In meekness they resolved to pay the heavy tribute.

Columbus and his band of followers spent a pleasant Christmas, their first under tropic skies. Only one small mishap marred the festivities. For reasons not explained, the ship *Santa María,* which lay anchored offshore, foundered and sank on December 25. The merrymakers rushed out to salvage the protruding hull, from which the groundwork was laid for a

military fort, to be named La Navidad (Fort Nativity). Before this building project had advanced very far, Columbus decided to return to Spain for the purpose of recruiting more helpers and gathering new equipment. It was clear to him that he had started a job with a future.

On January 4, 1493, he set sail with the remaining two ships, the *Pinta* and the *Niña*. In the Azores, which he reached on February 15, he took time to jot down the first outline of his experiences. After disembarking at Lisbon on March 4, he supplemented this with a second report, before continuing into Spain. Having thus marshaled his facts in writing, Christopher had little difficulty in impressing Their Most Catholic Majesties with the importance of his venture. Funds were raised immediately for a second expedition and the Admiral of the Ocean Seas found himself soon in command of seventeen galleons and fifteen hundred followers with whom he again put to sea on September 25.

This time, after an easy crossing, he entered West Indian waters through the Leeward Island group and stumbled upon a volcanic crag of some three hundred square miles in area, which he named Dominica. From here he headed straight for La Navidad and disaster, for the military bastion he had erected lay silent. The garrison of thirty-nine soldiers, whom he had left under command of Diego de Araña, lay slaughtered and reduced to a pile of blanched bones under the tropic sun. Here was the answer of the Indian owners of the land to an intruder who had abused their courtesy.

Now the voyage of discovery changed character. It became an invasion. These Caribbean lands and the vast continent lying to north and south of them were not empty and unclaimed wilderness. Native populations had lived here since the last ice age, and perhaps earlier. The white man's legions came without warrant or title. Their mission was self-willed and merciless, from Labrador and Plymouth Rock to Patagonia. In the century soon to follow, Conquistadores and Puritans alike would drive America's original sons from their home, wasting

no time on the ethical aspects of their thrice-profitable feat: expansion, exploration, expropriation.

In looking back, there is no way to excuse or justify this piece of shameless rapacity committed by Europe's overflow population against the unsuspecting inhabitants of another hemisphere. But world history hinges seldom on legality. The actions of mankind are dictated by need and expediency. These were factors that forced the gates to the treasury of the Indian continent, which thenceforth lay open to the white man's grasp.

CHAPTER 2

END OF CHRISTOPHER

THE Admiral's new company included not only military might, but an assortment of noblemen, scholars, farmers, mining experts, priests, laborers, and a physician. With such help he could fearlessly brave further native uprisings. In short, the fiasco of La Navidad must be erased from memory, as though it had never occurred. The job of settling would proceed.

Before the end of 1493 the first white community in America was founded a few miles east of La Navidad and named La Isabela, after the Queen. It was located near the present seaport of Puerto Plata, but would later be transferred to a point on the south coast, or Caribbean side of the island, where a gold cache was reputed to exist. To be sure, in moving the town the Spaniards claimed that it was for reasons of health. In any case, the first city council ever to meet in the New World was set up at La Isabela on April 24, 1494.

Having established this foothold, Columbus now began exploring the interior of La Española as well as the surrounding islands. In so doing he relaxed his vigilance over the enlarged crews that made up his colonists. Here and there strong-willed individuals decided to branch out on undertakings of their own, in defiance of centralized authority. Soon it became clear to the Admiral that his supremacy as originator and leader of the colonization project was at stake. He needed a new supply of troops to quell insubordination among veterans of the first expedition.

By now two of his brothers, Bartolomé and Diego Columbus, had joined Christopher in the New World. Leaving Bartolomé

in charge of the colony, the Admiral returned once more to Spain for reinforcements and arms. In his absence the work of exploration continued; on August 4, 1496, the mouth of the Ozama River on the southern coast of the island was found to be ideally suited for a great port city. Bartolomé named the spot La Nueva Isabela, deeming it a worthy replacement of the earlier settlement, up north. But an exchange of letters with Christopher nullified this decision. The new city became Santo Domingo del Puerto, which still later was changed to Santo Domingo de Guzmán in honor of Spain's distinguished Guzmán clan, the blood kin of Saint Dominic.

To his sorrow Christopher was not present at the founding of what would become the first white men's capital in the New World. His sojourn in Spain was hampered and delayed by intrigue and nepotism on the part of colonists whose relatives constituted a busy lobby at court. While Ferdinand and Isabella were still the Admiral's friends, their sympathies were being enlisted by fast-talking promoters who promised far greater revenues than Christopher had thus far been able to provide. That these independent operators and their partners overseas were bent on exploiting helpless natives by brutal methods, which did not stop at starvation and mass murder, was unknown to the sovereigns. What appeared irrefutable was the fact that Columbus and his brothers moved forward at a considered pace, while their growing host of rivals gave evidence of gaining faster and more glittering results.

It was not until May 30, 1498, that Christopher was able to start overseas again, with six ships and a skimpy military escort. In the hope of seeing a multiple stream of gold pouring into their coffers, Ferdinand and Isabella were spreading their favors thinly and over a growing number of applicants. The Admiral's star was no longer at its zenith; its luster had begun to dim.

On his third westward voyage Columbus took a longer and more southerly route. On July 31 he sighted the three peaks of an island that he called the Holy Trinity (Trinidad), and

thence favorable winds blew him toward the coast of what is today Venezuela. Here was his first contact with the mainland: he had discovered the American continent. Overwhelmed with joy, he gave way to pardonable if fantastic conjecture. Still laboring under the delusion that he had circled the globe and reached the eastern shores of Asia, he now felt certain that the lush Orinoco delta lands, rich in plant- and birdlife, were the site of the Biblical Paradise.

With a feeling of exaltation he steered northward now toward La Española's newly founded capital of Santo Domingo. He entered the natural harbor at the mouth of the Ozama River and chained his ships to a giant ceiba tree, on the right bank. Across the stream, sprawled over a breeze-swept promontory, a thriving settlement met his gaze. Much had been done during his absence. For him, not all of it was good. Ambition had pushed forward younger men (Christopher now brushed fifty), who rejected further tutelage from their erstwhile helmsman. On landing, no ceremony greeted the Discoverer, nor had any sort of office been left for him to fill. The brothers he had left behind to guard his interests had been similarly edged out of power; Christopher found them holding negligible posts, while new hands took over the reins of colonial government.

He could not accept such treatment in return for the services rendered by him and his brothers to Spain. Promptly he drew up a detailed complaint, which was dispatched to Their Majesties by return boat. But his enemies worked equally fast. They warned Ferdinand and Isabella that to retain Christopher as head of the colony was to raise up a Columbus dynasty that might end as a rival of the House of Aragón. It would go against the Crown's best interests to let the Admiral grow too big.

The King and Queen saw the point. They temporized by sending out a "royal inquirer" (*oidor real*) named Don Francisco de Bobadilla, Knight of Calatrava, to look into the matter. Bobadilla, in turn, decided that the problem called for a

thorough thrashing out in the legal courts of Spain, hence it was necessary that the Columbus brothers return to Europe at once. Christopher suspected the motives behind such a move, but Bobadilla allowed no protest. To forestall further resistance, the Admiral and his brothers were put in chains and shipped back to Cádiz, while Bobadilla himself took over the governorship of the colony.

The news that the great discoverer had arrived home as a prisoner aroused public opinion in Spain. In town and country the populace gathered to demonstrate against such injustice, whereupon Ferdinand and Isabella quickly reversed their policy. They released Columbus at once, though he was not clothed in his former powers. Instead, the King and Queen urged him to go about some more exploring beyond the limits of the realms he had already won for them. They even gave him four old ships with which to get going.

It was a humiliating offer. But he was embittered, and he wanted nothing so much as to leave Spain forever, so he accepted. Poorly equipped and with little heart for the venture, he set out in May of 1502 on his fourth and last journey to the New World. Between July 30, 1502, and January 24, 1503, he traced the entire eastern coast of Central America, opening settlements in what are now Honduras and Panama. But here a different type of Indian confronted him, unlike the pastoral natives of La Española. The mainland was inhabited by warrior tribes who made short shrift of Christopher's small landing force. By April of 1503 he counted his losses and abandoned the enterprise, heading instead for a small hospitable island called Jamaica.

He hardly made it. The battered brigantines that had been palmed off on him by his royal benefactors were rotted and on the verge of falling apart, so that they had to be beached in order to save their meager cargoes. Also, worry and diet deficiencies had broken the Admiral's health. He fell ill of dysentery and tropic fever.

At his last audience with Their Majesties in Spain the pledge

had been exacted that Christopher and his brothers would not again set foot on La Española. But as the Admiral's illness grew worse, a deck hand named Diego Méndez started across to Santo Domingo for help. The colony was at this time ruled by another governor, Don Nicolás de Ovando, a ruthless conqueror who began his term of office by slaughtering the native lord of Jaragua and decimating the province's Indian population. It was not easy to rouse this man's pity for Columbus. The best that Méndez could achieve was permission to fetch his sick master in a bark and to transfer him at Santo Domingo aboard one of twenty-three cargo ships that were headed for Europe.

The flotilla, carrying a heavy treasure of gold, set out from the mouth of the Ozama, within sight of the first church built in the Americas, the chapel of Nuestra Señora del Rosario (Our Lady of the Rosary). Scarcely two days later a hurricane lashed across the Caribbean and sank every ship except the foremost caravel, which took refuge at Puerto Hermoso de los Españoles, near the present city of Baní. Among the rescued was the fever-wracked Christopher.

The storm proved a major calamity for the island. Not only was the original city of Santo Domingo badly damaged, but earth tremors followed in the wake of the winds, opening deep crevasses in the ground. Out of these chasms issued a plague of ants that presently engulfed public buildings and homes, forcing the population to take flight. By Ovando's order the citizens packed up their belongings and transferred to the opposite side of the river, where the capital was rebuilt.

Columbus meanwhile continued on to Spain, where he landed at San Lúcar de Barrameda on November 7, 1504. Here he was greeted with the news that Queen Isabella, on whom his hopes were pinned, lay gravely ill. She died at the end of the month, before he could gain admittance to her presence. His next efforts were directed toward Ferdinand, but the King had retired into prolonged mourning at Segovia and received no one. Dejectedly the Admiral of the Ocean Seas set-

tled at Valladolid as a teacher of cartography and navigation, waiting his chance for a royal hearing. But heartbreak and disease combined to shatter his strength. On May 20, 1506, he died destitute and forsaken. His body was laid out in the Carthusian monastery of María de las Cuevas at Seville. King Ferdinand, who had not found it possible to make further use of the Discoverer's talents, paid a visit to the bier. It was small enough payment to the man whose vision and personal achievement launched Spain on her career as a world empire.

After his death the Italian-born expatriate was covered with sudden renown. In youth he had hired out as boatswain on English and French merchantmen, some of them freebooters. His genius had been later spurned by Portugal, as it was only half appreciated by the House of Castile and Aragón. But overnight he now became the most illustrious of Spaniards.

CHAPTER 3

FUNDAMENTALS

LA TIERRA que Más Amó Colón (The Land Columbus Loved Best) was the decorous euphuism applied thenceforth by the Admiral's followers to the island from which their own greed and self-interest had banned him. That La Española lay closer to his heart than any other land remains uncontested. He was homeless elsewhere, but here he had hoped to take root.

In a very special way Santo Domingo stands out among all its sister nations in the Western Hemisphere, for this graciously endowed Caribbean isle is the cradle of the modern, colonized Americas. The history of Santo Domingo forms the basis for every other history of the New World. No American, in the large and continental sense, should be ignorant of it. For on La Española, among the motley soldiery of Columbus, were to be found the nameless swashbucklers who would branch out on expeditions of their own and win from posterity the title of Conquistadores. There on the island they began as foot troopers: Diego de Velázquez, discoverer of Cuba; Hernán Cortez, who conquered Mexico; Pedro de Alvarado, master of Guatemala; Francisco Pizarro, of Peru; Alonso de Ojeda, of Venezuela; Juan de Esquivel, of Jamaica; Juan Ponce de León, he who wanted only a fountain of youth and came instead upon Puerto Rico and Florida. Also from Santo Domingo started Vasco Nuñez de Balboa, first white man to sight the Pacific Ocean, and Fernando de Soto, who discovered the giant stream called Mississippi.

To visit the scene of their anonymity, whence they moved on to blazing fame, is to relive on intimate and personal terms

the pageant of America. Not the Dominicans alone, but the whole Western world ought to turn a spotlight on the stage where the prologue to its dramatic past was enacted.

Christianity came early to the island, following the first reports made by Columbus to Spain. Friars of the Franciscan and Dominican orders arrived in large numbers and played a vital part in the colony's growth. They built schools, churches, and monasteries for the benefit of Spaniards and Indians alike. Nuns of the Order of Mercy followed, founding hospitals, orphanages, and homes for the indigent and old. The capital of Santo Domingo set up the first bishopric, with Brother Ramírez de Fuenleal as its titular head.

The city's development checked off a long chain of "firsts." Adobe (mud brick) building began here after the transfer caused by the plague of ants, with a two-story structure known as Casa del Cordón (the House of the Cord). Here lived the Commander of the Order of Saint Francis, Don Francisco de Garay; the Garay coat of arms was sculptured on both sides of the main portal, with the tasseled cord of the Franciscan cassock chiseled above in high relief. It is still in use as a modest hotel.

The series of viceregal administrations that were to rule all Spanish America took the form of the original court established in Santo Domingo. Here too met the first Real Audiencia (Royal Audience) that passed legal judgment on colonial problems. A judge of the Audiencia, Licenciado Ayllón, together with his navigator Esteban Gómez, planted the flag of Spain on what is today United States soil, long before the Pilgrim Fathers thought of leaving England; for several decades the area off Cape Hatteras was known as Ayllón-Gómez Land.

The Royal Mint, the University of Saint Thomas Aquinas, the Palace of the Captains General, the Hospital of San Nicolás de Bari, all became models for subsequent institutions that sprang up on the mainland. At Santo Domingo the first American historians, Fray Bartolomé de las Casas and Gonzalo

Fernández de Oviedo, wrote the earliest books. But there was one other aspect of colonization, tragic in its consequences, for which the original responsibility accrues to La Española: the importation of Negro slaves from Africa. This crime against humanity was emulated with reckless abandon by French, English, and Portuguese colonists, all of whom rued their error without escaping punishment for its commission. More than four centuries later the accounts are not yet fully squared.

What lay behind this ill-advised and arbitrary step?

Spain had no precedent to look to in her preliminary phase as a transoceanic empire. The lessons taught by ancient Rome and Greece were hardly applicable over such vast distances, and in *terra incognita* of which no European had the slightest grasp. The classic conquests known to history had invariably swallowed weaker civilizations, but not aborigines of totally alien condition and stock. Asia and Africa, Mongol and Moor, were no strangers to Europe. But the Amerindian was.

Columbus did not see himself as another Tamerlane or Attila. He planned to pacify and wheedle native populations into a loose and co-operative alliance under the scepter of Spain. Though difficult, the scheme might in time have been carried out with mutual satisfaction. But the Admiral had not been able to surround himself with a select body of high-minded knights. His cohorts were rough-hewn adventurers and desperadoes, out for quick gain. Their lawless excesses aroused antagonism on the part of otherwise tractable Indian tribes. Only after outrages had been committed against them did Taíno warriors turn upon the trespassers.

Originally the native population of La Española was estimated at between three and four hundred thousand. Living in a land of plenty, with ideal climatic conditions, these enviable peoples engaged in hunting and fishing as a means of livelihood. Hard labor was unknown to them, since the earth furnished untold edibles without need of tilling. Placer gold lay about in river beds and bits of coral could be chipped off any coastal rock for the fashioning of ornaments. Coconut

palms supplied house-building materials, fodder for livestock, cosmetic and medicinal oils, plus a fruit that was served up in its own drinking bowl. Such things were unknown in frugal, arid, austere Spain, where men scrabbled and fought to wrest a pittance from the earth.

Needless to say, those early Spanish voyagers were dazzled by the fairy land on which they had set foot. Their wonder led to covetousness and insatiable greed. No one could get enough. Native labor must be enlisted to carry foodstuffs and, above all, to sift every brook and stream for gold. When this source seemed exhausted, Indians were put to work digging mines and tunneling through mountains for more treasure. No mercy was shown when men collapsed under such unaccustomed toil. Before long, native work gangs died off in droves, either from silicosis, because they were kept day and night within the bowels of the earth, or from starvation, since no care was taken of their needs. By 1514 the Dominican friar Bartolomé de las Casas protested to Madrid that only fourteen thousand Indians survived on the island, and these were threatened with extinction if protective measures were not immediately taken. Long before this, in 1503, Spanish galleons had already started the shipment of African labor to supplement the "sickly" Taínos, who died like flies under the despotism of their overseers. Mortality was particularly great in the sugar fields where shade-loving Indians were made to work under a broiling sun. Negroes, protected by natural pigment, fared better at this task, whereupon more human cargo was rushed over from the Congo. The virile African race mingled with what was left of the island's native stock and, due to the overwhelming predominance of the former, soon blotted out all trace of Quisqueya's original children.

Only in folklore and legend, and in the names of mountains, rivers, and places, does the Taíno past survive. Traces of Indian features recur among villagers and mountain people of the interior, where inaccessibility afforded refuge. Rock carvings, household gods, and bits of pottery gathered from

remote caves also give mute testimony to a pastoral life that is gone from the earth.

More there is not. And the loss is cause for sorrow, because such traces of character and personality as are known to have been part of America's original children in that special world of the Antilles (Spanish: *antilla*—a promontory or headland) would have greatly enriched and mellowed Europe's immigrant generations to come. We have the diary notes of Christopher Columbus as proof of this. The words he employs are hardly suited to mankind as we know it today, for they sound like an excerpt from the Beatitudes. Thus wrote the Discoverer:

> I found the natives of La Española (Santo Domingo, Haiti) to be gentle beings, hospitable, truthful, loyal, curious and merry, walking in beauty, and possessors of a spiritual religion . . .

A breed that has learned to manipulate the atom bomb does not appear too burdened with a "spiritual religion" nor is it likely to find itself with much time left for curiosity or merriment.

CHAPTER 4

DIEGO COLUMBUS

WHILE their father was abroad in pursuit of adventure the two sons of Columbus, Diego and Ferdinand, had been left in care of the monks at La Rábida, half a mile from the Spanish port of Palos. Here the lads were schooled under the tutelage of Friar Juan Pérez, in whom Columbus put great trust. The cleric went occasionally to preach at Granada, when the court was in residence, and he thus had contact with the Queen.

It was after the first good news of the discovery that Isabella was reminded by Friar Pérez of the two Columbus children in his charge. Since their father had brought glory to Spain, would it not be fitting to do something for the boys? Isabella agreed. She was in her early forties, still handsome, and aggrieved over the blight on her daughter, Juana La Loca (Mad Juana). Eagerly she ordered the Admiral's sons brought to court, where they were dressed in silken doublets, and trained to be her pages. At the time they came to the Alhambra, Diego was thirteen years old, and his brother barely five.

At Granada and later in Madrid the children breathed the rarefied air of aristocracy. There lived at court two cousins of the King, the Second Duke of Alba and his younger brother, Don Fernando de Toledo. Toledo served as Montero Mayor, or chief royal bodyguard; in this capacity he, together with his wife and small daughter María, came into daily contact with the Queen's entourage, which included her pages. It was thus that a childhood romance sprang up between the high-born María de Toledo and Diego Columbus, the Navigator's adolescent son.

There was strong family opposition to the match, but under the Queen's sentimental guardianship the young lovers kept secret trysts and pledged their fealty. They clung to each other through the bitter years when Diego saw his father's star decline, and there was bickering between the Admiral and the court. While Christopher Columbus languished ill on Jamaica, Diego and María were joined in marriage.

They continued living under the protection of Isabella until, after her death, Diego's position became untenable. The young couple retired into obscurity. But the final return of Christopher Columbus and his end, after a futile fight for justice, suddenly roused public opinion to clamor for redress. Posthumously the wrongs committed against the Admiral of the Ocean Seas must be made right. The honors denied the father must fall to his elder son.

Diego found himself promptly called back to court and made heir to Christopher's titles. As Second Admiral and Duke of the Indies, he was groomed to succeed the retiring governor of Santo Domingo, Nicolás de Ovando. Early in 1509 he and his bride set out for the New World. They were to rule as Viceroy and Virreine.

On July 11 the young couple and their escort of nobles and ladies-in-waiting sailed up the Ozama River and dropped anchor. In the heat of midsummer they went ashore, sweltering under their regal velvets and brocades, but presenting a colorful pageant as they rode in state to the fortress that was to be their residence. More than a decade earlier, on his second voyage, Christopher Columbus had brought the first horses and cattle to America; his son Diego now introduced the elegance of a crested gilt coach.

The fortress, part of which served as a military prison, was a grim and forbidding place. Its name, Torre del Homenaje (Tower of Homage), derived from the fact that here every new official, whether governor or captain general, swore allegiance to Spain. Here too Diego underwent the ceremony of investiture, with Doña María in full gala at his side. But after

the pomp and circumstance subsided, the viceregal couple went house hunting, for Doña María was with child and an army barracks seemed hardly conducive to a happy accouchement.

As yet, the city of Santo Domingo offered little in the way of rental property. The only acceptable residence was the home of the Garay family, the "House of the Cord." With true Spanish hospitality the Garays moved over, and the Diegos moved in. It was a temporary arrangement, to be sure, since early in 1510 the cornerstone was laid for a proper viceregal dwelling. This took the form of a splendid castle of medieval Spanish design, with thick stone walls, a tower and winding staircase, deep windows with loveseats carved out of the masonry, and a double colonnade of arches front and back. Inside, the floors were patterned in bright tiles, which also adorned the private oratory and the niches that sheltered statues of the Virgin of Mercies (Nuestra Señora de la Merced) and Saint Joseph. The walls were hung with tapestries, which counteracted mild winter chills and kept the damp sea fog from settling in the rooms. On feast days every windowsill was decorated with long *colgaduras* (draperies) of embroidered damask, such as floated from outside balconies of buildings in Spain. A gracious formalism had entered the life of the colony, as the breath of empire reached into the tropics.

By modern calculations the outlay for the Viceroy's palace was incredibly small. The architect's bill, not including interior furnishings, came to three thousand gold ducats, or just over seven thousand U.S. dollars. The mighty walls, with their fine window frames and arched doorways, are of such solid quality even today that they could be made habitable in short order. As for the setting, no location could have been more fitting; the palace was built on an elevation beside the Ozama River, with full view of harbor traffic and the open sea. In almost every room the imagination of today's visitor can reconstruct cushions of velvet piled on the loveseats, where courtiers dallied or ladies looked up from their needlework to gaze—

perhaps nostalgically—toward the horizon, and the billowin sails of a galleon from Spain.

Here Doña María de Toledo held court after the manner c her royal kin at home. The garden, lush with blooms, becam the playground of a growing brood: four daughters and tw sons. It was a life of exile from all that she had once believe most dear, but that had now been transplanted with her.

Diego's reign was beset almost at once with vicissitudes. O arrival he met Fray Bartolomé de las Casas, who complaine angrily of abuses committed against the Indians. It appeare that Diego's predecessor Ovando, enraged at being recalle to Europe, had vented his spite upon more than eighty Taín nobles, among them the revered and beautiful Queen of Ja ragua, Anacaona. The majority of Ovando's victims had bee decapitated or burned at the stake, but Anacaona was dragge to the gallows. Following this, the ruthless despot had seize the properties of the native *caciques* (chieftains) and loade his ships with plunder. Let his successor face the reckonin Forced out of power, Ovando left behind him a nation ou raged and seething with revolt.

He had exchanged cool courtesies with Diego Columbu on the latter's arrival at Santo Domingo, and somewhat pe emptorily requisitioned some additional schooners from th new Viceroy's fleet. With these he sailed away into disaste as a violent storm at sea swallowed up his stolen treasur Saving only his bare life, Ovando managed to reach Spain an a stark future of poverty and disgrace.

The island people had meanwhile consolidated under th leadership of the young Indian chieftain Guarocuya, a gran nephew of the martyred Queen Anacaona. Taíno traditic honored the descendants of brothers or sisters above sons an daughters, on the very reasonable assumption that a man w not necessarily related to the fruit of his wife's womb, b blood ties with the progeny of a brother or a sister were i controvertible. Thus Indian dynasties in the Americas (notab among the Aztec, Maya, and Inca nations) assured the puri

of their strain by recognizing only nephews or nieces as legitimate heirs.

Guarocuya, a mere child during the early Spanish invasion, had already been converted by Franciscan friars and given the Christian name of Enrique, or its diminutive, Enriquillo. He had been put to work as a slave on the lands held by one of the minor conquistadores, Francisco de Valenzuela, at La Maguana. Here he fell in love with Mencía, also a captive of noble Taíno origin, and they were married. At the time of the Ovando atrocities, Valenzuela, a notorious libertine, had seized Mencía for himself and ordered Guarocuya thrown in chains. This fired a general revolt during which the young chieftain marched on the capital to face the Viceroy with a demand for justice.

Diego Columbus gave immediate orders for Mencía's liberation and the arrest of Valenzuela. But he now discovered that in donning the cloak and titles of his illustrious father he had not been vouchsafed more than nominal authority. Crafty King Ferdinand, back in Madrid, had welched on the pact made with Christopher Columbus, disclaiming any promise that the honors earned by the Admiral of the Ocean Seas were to include hereditary powers. Thus Diego followed his sire's footsteps as an admiral, a viceroy, and a duke, but he might not govern. The panoply of Spain was his to nurture and unfurl. The colony, meanwhile, had been notified by Ferdinand that all questions of policy and administration were out of Diego's hands and under the direct authority of the Crown. As a result the hardened and experienced subalterns, who had raised themselves to independent despots throughout the provinces of La Española, laughed at Diego's disciplinary efforts and defied him at every turn.

The Viceroy chafed under these untenable conditions. On April 9, 1515, he hastened back to Europe in order to challenge the King. He would bring a lawsuit, if need be, against the Crown, demanding full inheritance of his father's office and rights. But on arrival at Madrid he found Ferdinand absent

for reasons of health; the King had gone to Plasencia and was headed for Seville. En route there, in the hospital of Madrigalejos, Ferdinand the Catholic died at dawn of January 23, 1516. He had designated as his heir the sixteen-year-old Charles, son of Mad Juana and Philip, Archduke of Austria, who lived in Flanders (he was born at Ghent). Still a minor, Charles had no knowledge of his grandfather's overseas entanglements or of the merits of Diego's cause; he was being trained to become Holy Roman Emperor and to ascend the throne of the Habsburgs as Charles V. To bring a lawsuit against one in so exalted a position was palpably hopeless. Diego retraced his steps and sailed back for Santo Domingo, where Doña María sat at the palace window of the Alcázar, looking out to sea.

He found things worse than on his departure. A terrible epidemic of smallpox had broken out, taking forty thousand lives, mostly among the undernourished and overworked slaves who were penned up at night in big crowded corrals without sanitary facilities of any sort. As the disease spread among Indians and Negroes alike, white colonists became frightened and took flight for Cuba, Puerto Rico, Jamaica, and other islands. The pestilence lasted four months, followed by another plague of ants that rivaled the locusts of Egypt in its destruction of livestock and crops.

This succession of tragedies coincided with a pageant of significant events in Europe. On October 23, 1520, Charles V (already King Charles I of Spain) was crowned at Aix-la-Chapelle as German Emperor, or "Holy Roman Emperor of Germanic Nations." His domains included Austria, Naples, Sicily, Sardinia, the Netherlands—in short, most of the Christian world. At the age of twenty he was master over a realm in which the "sun never set." In the second year of his accession a dissenting monk named Martin Luther defied Catholic dogma before the Diet of Worms and set the Reformation in motion, while England's Henry VIII embarked on a series of matrimonial ventures. But, most important of all, Spain, Aus-

tria, and Britain joined forces in a profitable war against France's King Francis I, which ended with a humiliating treaty, signed in January of 1526, by the imprisoned French sovereign at Madrid. During these violent and disorderly times a host of displaced Europeans, who—nurtured on war—had lost their taste for dull, peaceful enterprises, migrated in search of robust adventure. Demobilized soldiery turned to brigandage and piracy, with sights set on the New World, while Charles V ensured his new conquests by banishing raffish elements overseas.

Back in Santo Domingo, Diego Columbus found his situation more untenable than ever, as the Emperor-King continued Ferdinand's policy of denying the Viceroy anything but nominal power. With meager and untrustworthy support Diego faced three successive crises: the growing Indian rebellion led by Guarocuya, a sympathetic uprising of imported African slaves, and a series of depredations by French freebooters who suddenly descended upon the tiny island of La Tortuga off the northwest tip of Haiti. If the colony were to be saved for Spain, Diego needed help and he needed it fast. Again he sailed for Europe, in March of 1524, to confront Charles with a desperate appeal. He was accompanied on this trip by his two eldest daughters, while Doña María remained behind as titular representative.

If King Ferdinand had been elusive, Charles V was even more difficult to pin down. Not only was Diego baited and held off by endless procrastination, while His Majesty attended to the Empire's affairs at Bruges or in Vienna, but a successor, Don Sebastian Ramírez de Fuenleal was being secretly groomed to take the Viceroy's place. Also, while Diego waxed impatient in royal anterooms, the ship that had brought him was commandeered for unexplained uses and no replacement appeared available. The year 1525 dragged by in paralyzing frustration, while overseas the patrimony left by Christopher to his son (one of the Navigator's rewards had been the Dukedom of Veragua, with the island of Jamaica

thrown in) was being parceled out among quick-witted opportunists. Rumors of this and worry about his wife and the younger children combined to break Diego's health. He collapsed in his lodgings at Puebla de Montalván, near Toledo, dying on February 23, 1526.

Again, as in the case of Christopher Columbus, the royal court of Spain could not afford to show itself neglectful or remiss. Since it was safer to honor the dead than to fulfill commitments to the living, Charles V ordered elaborate obsequies held for the hapless Diego. There were processions and memorial services, after which the Viceroy's casket was lowered with that of his father into the crypt of the Carthusian Monastery at Seville. In this manner the niceties of good form were served, while behind a show of official mourning the political forces of Spain rejoiced at the passing of a troublesome claimant.

The island of La Española was regarded thenceforth as free game for ambitious elements at Madrid, who by bribery, extortion, and every other form of intrigue strove to occupy the viceregal seat. Ruthless courtiers vied with each other for the hand of Diego's widow, in the hope of laying claim to an inheritance that they themselves denied her. Their conduct was the more reprehensible as Doña María de Toledo was still young, still beautiful, and unaware of the cold-blooded plotting that went on around her. She had come to the New World as a happy bride, filled with illusions and the joy of building a dream setting for her peaceable wedded life. Five children had been born to her in the stately palace on the banks of the Ozama, far from Spain. And here sorrow would overtake her. But what she could not know was that the honeymoon isle, where she was soon to become an outcast, would forever be engraved upon her heart as home.

CHAPTER 5

THE CENTURY OF BUCCANEERS

DOÑA MARÍA DE TOLEDO had received the news of her widowhood at the Alcázar, her lovely honeymoon palace on the Ozama River. She knew by instinct that double tragedy had struck and that her husband's passing would strip the family still further of its rights. Her sons, the five-year-old Luís and the baby Diego, would hardly be able to press their claims before a distant Madrid court. Besides, the progressive despoiling of the Columbus assets followed too clear a pattern to allow much hope, even if she herself pleaded her children's case. When the great Christopher died he had left his son a string of sonorous titles and a high political office, which a jealous monarch and his henchmen had promptly whittled down. The legacy that awaited Luís was certain to be trimmed still further, with the younger Diego fading into oblivion. The gratitude of nations had a way of dwindling in exact ratio to the widening gap of years. In a face-saving gesture Spain had gone through the motion of rewarding the family whose sire had transformed her from a third-rate European state into a colonial empire, but, after getting used to greatness, Spaniards forgot that it was not of their own doing. Nothing is shorter than the memory of a debt.

Since Fuenleal took up residence in the palace, Doña María found herself suddenly homeless. She was given refuge at the Monastery of St. Dominic until the period of rigorous mourning ended, after which she set out with her children for Spain, to do battle with the Crown. Like her hapless husband, she soon learned that her pleas fell on deaf ears. Charles V was busy carving up Europe and marching on Rome where, in

1527, he climaxed all previous exploits by making a prisoner of the Medici Pope, Clement VII. Furthermore, a new challenge had arisen in the East, where Suleyman the Magnificent led his Turkish hordes across Hungary after the dreadful battle of Mohács Field. With such issues on his mind, the Emperor could not be expected to heed an obscure widow's lamentations. Doña María reckoned her journey a wasted effort except for the marriage of one of her daughters, Isabel, to the Count of Gelves, a distant relative of the late queen.

For her sons no brilliant future beckoned. Luís Columbus grew up in the shadow of greatness, yet without prospect of living up to its demands. Instead of exploring new worlds he contented himself with the minor conquest of women. His weakness was marriage, at shockingly brief intervals and without benefit of legal divorce, which led to repeated sojourns in jail. Between his first conjugal adventure with Ana de Castro, daughter of the Countess de Lemos, and a final invalid union with a thirteen-year-old girl named Luisa de Carvajal (when he himself was sixty-seven) the grandson of Christopher had served time in the prisons of Arévalo, Castillo de la Mota, Simancar, Villaverde, Madrid, Pinto, Medina, and Orán.

His brother Diego, on the other hand, failed to attract attention even in boudoirs. He died a bachelor, without issue, and his meaningless titles of Fourth Admiral as well as Duke of Veragua and Marquez de Jamaica fell to the House of Berwick and Alba.

Together with the fading star of Columbus, Santo Domingo now entered an abrupt decline. In 1519 Hernán Cortez had left the island and landed in Mexico, where his quick triumph over the empire of the Montezumas made history. News of the vast lands and treasures of the Aztecs threw the little Caribbean colony into an uproar. Settlers in Santo Domingo became restless and avid for a share in the reported riches of the nearby continent. Rumors from Yucatán and Venezuela, as well as the newly explored Peru, added to the gold fever. Sailboats and

barks departed from Santo Domingo, carrying thousands to the rainbow's end.

All but abandoned by its white conquerors, and with its Indian and Negro slave population decimated through senseless exploitation, the island languished defenseless and forsaken. At the same time the Caribbean was alive with French and English pirate ships whose purpose was to intercept and rob Spanish galleons that carried foodstuffs, gold, and fiber to Cádiz. With no patrol guarding the long coastline, the robber schooners hid in remote harbors and coves, while their crews presently ventured ashore and gained a foothold. The pirates infiltrating La Española were French, while their British counterparts preferred the chain of the Bahamas for their depredations. Before the lackadaisical garrison at Santo Domingo awakened to the full realization of what was happening, France had got wind of the buccaneer landings and turned them to profit by staking an official claim. Depending on the point of view, outlaws could become national heroes.

As most of the French privateers were Huguenots or outright apostates, their arrival on Santo Domingo was a thorn in the side of the Catholic Church. Colonial authorities gained passionate support from the clergy in their effort to drive the intruders out. But it was too late. France made the most of her advantage by sending shiploads with legitimate emigrés under military escort to supplement the pirate invasion and lend it the stamp of respectability. To counteract this, Charles V declared a new war in which England's Henry VIII again took the Empire's side against the French. In Europe, France lost battles, but when peace came she had not been dislodged in the Caribbean.

Quite possibly the Holy Roman Emperor, now middle-aged, wearied of mastery, for in 1555 he split up his vast realms between his son Philip and his own brother Ferdinand. The former became King Philip II of Spain and the Netherlands, while the latter assumed the Austro-German crown. Charles

himself, after a formal abdication, retired to a monk's cell at the monastery of Yuste, in Estremadura.

Through the century that followed, Spain was ruled successively by four Philips, all of whom were too involved with European conflicts to keep an eye on matters abroad. Unhampered, French colonists continued to take root in La Española until the western half of the island was studded with Gallic names. During this period English piracy too made inroads on Santo Domingo, giving the colony a hybrid appellation: Hispaniola. In 1586, under the eager sponsorship of England's Queen Elizabeth, the buccaneer Francis Drake (later knighted) entered the Ozama River with thirty-one ships and some six thousand men. He seized the capital and made his headquarters in the cathedral. For a full month Drake systematically sacked the city's homes, convents, and government buildings, before setting them afire. He hanged some unco-operative priests in the square opposite the Old Dominican Convent, before departing at the height of the blaze.

But England and France were not alone in harassing the defenseless island. Spain herself, under Philip III, committed an egregious blunder by "punishing" several coastal towns for their meek attitude toward marauding pirates. It did not occur to the governing minds at Madrid that resistance to corsair bands was suicidal, and that such towns as Monte Cristi and Puerto Plata showed themselves conciliatory only so as to escape the capital's fate. In any case, Philip III ordered these ports as well as the flourishing inland cities of Santiago de los Caballeros and La Vega razed, and their populations scattered. This bit of indulgence in dynastic temper was to cost Spain dearly, for the Atlantic shore of Hispaniola was now left deserted and at the mercy of all comers. New waves of Frenchmen poured in, particularly from the pirate stronghold on La Tortuga. The colony was fast losing its Castilian face. It also acquired a new name: Saint Domingue.

This period of increased French expansion coincided with a minor event, which at the time went almost unobserved,

namely the sailing on September 6, 1620, from Plymouth, England, of a decrepit ship called the *Mayflower*. Its passengers, members of a Separatist congregation which had removed from Scrooby some time earlier, arrived on Cape Cod just in time to celebrate a precarious but grateful Christmas.

On Saint Domingue the hard-pressed Spaniards had less and less to celebrate. During the next fifty years they were pushed eastward until, in 1697, they were forced to cede one third of the island in a pact known as the Treaty of Ryswick. But the end was not yet. Steadily thereafter French power grew until, by 1795, the whole colony was overrun. A new treaty signed at Basilea (Basle) closed the door on Spain.

Under French rule the island now acquired a new character. To begin with, slave importation from Africa gained fresh impetus, until blacks outnumbered whites in an alarming ratio. Through a ruthless system of exploitation, forty thousand idle French plantation owners soon were living off the labor of more than half a million serfs.

The contrast between lavish riches at the top and abject poverty at the bottom of this patriarchal society defied description. Not even Russian or Chinese potentates commanded the servants, handmaidens, concubines, and bodyguards that surrounded the smallest property holder in the Haitian hinterland.

When Creoles (Frenchmen born in the colony) traveled abroad they became the cynosure of envious eyes, as even infants in arms were escorted by a personal retinue. Quite flagrantly the wealth derived from sugar, tobacco, grains, and untold other treasures with which Hispaniola was blessed put Europe's greatest fortunes to shame. The pampered descendants of those first tattered brigands who had dropped anchor at La Tortuga now kept fabulous palaces in Paris, which were rivaled only by the fantastic Arabian Nights establishments they owned in Port au Prince.

What was more galling still, crude planters' wives, daughters, and mistresses choked under jewels that made aristocratic belles in European capitals look indigent. Nowhere in all his-

tory, as far back as the moguls of Asia, the Egyptian pharaohs, or Byzantium's empresses, could there be found so monstrous a record of extravagance.

By the same token the day of reckoning, when it finally came, was never more ghastly. It descended upon the sun-bathed dual island of Haiti and Quisqueya with a pall of horror and darkness that has not faded from the pages of West Indian history.

CHAPTER 6

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

FRANCE had come up in the world since her last thrashing at the hands of Spain. After the unhappy days of Francis I she had been ruled by a succession of Valois princes named Henri, and later by the parade of bewigged, powdered, spectacular Bourbons. Outstanding among these were the brilliant Louis XIV and the dissolute Louis XV. But it was feeble and innocuous Louis XVI who paid the bill, together with his pretty and coquettish wife Marie Antoinette, as an oppressed and hungry nation realized suddenly that it had had enough of parasitic class government. In 1789 the storm broke in the wake of the example set by Washington's rebellion against England. The fires of freedom burned high as the knell of monarchal absolutism ushered in representative government by the Etats Généraux, while the guillotine's blade made short work of the hated nobility.

Echoes of these happenings reached Saint Domingue, where an organization that called itself *Les Amis du Nègre* (The Friends of the Negro) began stirring up unrest and anger among the slaves. The words "liberty, equality, fraternity" rang out the tocsin of revolt, and on a summer night in 1791 a wave of terror swept the island. Seized by a fever of revenge, the aroused slaves turned on their masters and slaughtered every French man, woman, and child on sight. The massacre did not lack incidents of unspeakable barbaric torture, for which Victor Hugo's *Bug-Jargal* will furnish abundant statistics. Steaming under the blaze of a tropic dawn the colony awoke from a bloodbath that has no equal in history.

There followed upon this hurricane of horror an era of al-

most ludicrous experimentation with untried autonomy. Setting up their own government, the Negroes combined African practices with such French traditions as they had observed under the rule of their masters. They donned European dress but lent it the flamboyance of primitive costumes, while the Haitian version of a military uniform topped by an oversized Wellington hat became an extravaganza of gold-braided magnificence.

France, to be sure, was not satisfied with this turn of events. Revolt against tyranny was all very well, if it involved the ousting of a Bourbon king and his licentious court. But to lose a highly profitable colony was something else again. Promptly an expeditionary force was readied and sent overseas to put down the revolt and punish its leaders. In this undertaking France won the help of Spanish elements in the eastern portion of the island, where the slaves had remained unaware of developments across the Haitian mountains. England too sent an expeditionary force to the mouth of the Ozama, to implement the restoration of French control. It was of greatest importance to British interests in the Caribbean that the sparks of revolution be extinguished before they were blown to adjoining islands.

In Europe, too, reaction was setting in. After the excesses of the Commune, France accepted a soldier from Corsica—Napoleon Bonaparte—as its leader. Appointed first consul on November 9, 1799, Napoleon crowned himself emperor a year later and ushered in a period of nationalism and conquest. While dreaming of extending French frontiers across the map of Europe, he did not forget the lost Caribbean plum. He sent his brother-in-law, General Le Clerc (husband of Pauline Bonaparte), with a squadron and two able assistants, Generals Ferrand and Kerverseaux, to occupy the Spanish capital of Santo Domingo.

The island was prepared for this. Among the Negro leaders was a former slave named Toussaint L'Ouverture (his first name had been taken from his erstwhile master, while the last

derived from a gap between his front teeth) who claimed to be the heir of Guou Guinou, king of the Arcadas, a tribe in Africa. Consumed with a passion for liberty, L'Ouverture had swept across Hispaniola and taken over the post of governor. Because of his French uniform and instinctive military astuteness his followers called him "The Black Napoleon." L'Ouverture had no objection to this. In a letter to Bonaparte he employed the address, "From the greatest of Blacks to the greatest of Whites!" It was a phrase that fired the Emperor of France to action.

In 1802 L'Ouverture's successful career met with reverses as General Victor Emanuel Le Clerc drove the Negro garrison from the banks of the Ozama. L'Ouverture fled inland, taking hostages with him and applying a scorched-earth policy to every mile he traversed. But he was ultimately captured and shipped in chains to France. He died of starvation in a dungeon.

Le Clerc did not long enjoy his victory. The French troops, reared in a European climate, had no resistance against tropic germs. An epidemic of yellow fever broke out among them and General Le Clerc was one of the first casualties. His year of triumph ended with death for himself and France's permanent evacuation of Saint Domingue.

A new upsurge of Negro ambition now seized the island under the banner of one of L'Ouverture's officers, General Jean Jacques Dessalines, a former slave born in Guinea and transported to the New World as a child. In a mopping-up action of indescribable violence, Dessalines crisscrossed the colony like a scourge, bent on slaughtering all Creoles, whites, and octoroons as well. For this the reorganized independent state declared him governor for life. But Dessalines had more picturesque ideas. On October 8, 1804, he arranged his own coronation and assumed the title of Jean Jacques I, Emperor of Haiti.

His glory was a thorn in the side of several comrades in arms, among them another veteran of L'Ouverture's cam-

paigns, General Henri Christophe, a Negro of gigantic physique, born on the island of Grenada. Rebelling against the autocratic tyranny of Dessalines, Christophe led an insurrection that ended with the self-appointed emperor's death. A republic was declared, with Christophe elected its first president. However, personal vanity afflicted him no less than his predecessor; by 1811 he had decided upon the realization of his own private dream. He declared himself King Henri I, and proceeded with the erection of a stupendous fortified mountain castle named La Citadelle, near La Ferrière below Cap Haitien, and the pleasure palace of Sans-Souci outside the northern town of Milôt. Untold victims, prisoners of war for the most part, succumbed during the building of these architectural monuments (the figure is set at twenty thousand). But Christophe too could not resist the corroding temptations of power. He ruled with iron hand until the ranks of his supporters thinned and he was left paralyzed and encircled by enemies. He committed suicide within the walls of Sans-Souci, by shooting himself with a silver bullet, being, he was certain, immune to lead because of a voodoo charm given him in early manhood.

While France had officially abandoned her claim to Hispaniola, there were survivors of the Le Clerc campaign who steadfastly refused to give up the fight. One of these, General Marie Louis Ferrand, held out with the aid of Admiral Missiessy in a series of guerrilla maneuvers. But the death of King Christophe encouraged a rebirth of Spanish activity in the eastern part of the island, under the colonist and lumberman Juan Sánchez Ramírez, who proposed to march against the black Haitians and the remaining stragglers from France. General Ferrand engaged the Ramírez force in battle at Palo Hincado, near Seibo, but was routed, whereupon he killed himself.

Encouraged by this initial success, Ramírez next seized the capital of Santo Domingo and formed a new government which he hoped to place under the protection of Spain. Unfortunately the motherland found herself in sorry straits. King

Ferdinand VII ruled at Madrid as puppet of Napoleon, who at the moment dominated the European continent. Ferdinand was far too timid and disheartened for such faraway enterprises as the reconquest of Hispaniola. His pusillanimity earned Spain the Dominican epithet España Boba (Stupid Spain) and caused the colonists to follow the example of Mexico, Peru, and the other Latin American nations who had already declared their independence. Unfortunately the little island republic was too weak to stand up against the overwhelming Negro hordes at the western mountain slopes, hence, under sponsorship of José Nuñez de Cáceres, a plea was sent to the South American Liberator Simón Bolívar, requesting annexation to Greater Colombia, which comprised the present republics of Colombia, Venezuela, and Ecuador. Bolívar thought it unwise, however, to take in more territory, particularly since this involved racial complications. He refused.

This blow came to the Dominican Republic in 1821, and led at once to disastrous consequences. The western end of the island, now known permanently as Haiti, had been governed by Christophe's successor, President Pétion, upon whose death Jean Pierre Boyer assumed power. The negotiations with Bolívar gave Boyer a pretext to lead a punitive expedition against the Dominicans for their attempt to split the island and introduce "foreign" domination. Promptly the accommodating Cáceres turned about and threw in his lot with the Haitians. He welcomed Boyer outside the gates of Santo Domingo and handed him the city keys. The year was 1822 and with it began the Long Night of Darkness, as seen through Dominican eyes.

For twenty-two years the island remained under Haiti's rule. During this period nearly all signs of Spanish culture were gradually stamped out, as countless families fled to the mainland, and even the long-established clergy gave up its foothold. To counteract this exodus, Boyer encouraged more immigration from Africa and also welcomed fugitive slaves from the United States. Thus the island population grew progressively

darker and the dream of Toussaint L'Ouverture had indeed become realized. Saint Domingue was a Negro republic.

Whatever traces of Spanish speech, custom, culture, and tradition managed to survive this period did so in secret and under constant danger. Literature and the arts moved underground or vanished with their practitioners into exile. Music and folklore took on the coloring and the patois of Afro-French association, while the clear stream of well-implanted Catholicism became clouded with the influx of voodoo.

On the positive side of the ledger Dominican crafts were enriched by a new originality of pattern and design, just as African rhythms modified and embellished the dance figures introduced to the New World by the gypsies of Spain. For, even under an unwanted political yoke, people cultivate their arts and sing their songs. In the world of creative effort there is no captivity.

CHAPTER 7

PHASES OF DELIVERANCE

NOT all who turned their backs on Santo Domingo said good-by for good. Many were the patriots who employed their time of exile in planning their country's deliverance. Among these was a young scholar, Juan Pablo Duarte, who slipped back to the island and there formed a secret society known as *La Trinitaria,* which he headed in union with two idealistic followers, Francisco del Rosario Sánchez and Ramón Mella. Under the motto *"Diós, Patria y Libertad"* ("God, Country and Liberty"), they rallied nine adherents who met in the house of Don Juan Isidro Pérez, opposite the church of El Carmen. Their first act was the creation of a flag, a field of red and blue quarterings divided by a white cross, with an open Bible on its center shield. With this banner the recruiting of other members proceeded, slowly, secretly, with infinite caution. By 1843, five years after Duarte's return, the movement had gained sufficient strength for action. A split in the government at Port au Prince, where Boyer had been deposed by a rival, President Charles Hérard, provided the chance. While Haitians recovered from this minor confusion, Duarte set March 24 for the outbreak of revolt.

With Sánchez and Mella at his side, he marched through the capital, followed by an enthusiastic, shouting crowd. Haitian police closed in, but Duarte reached the palace of the black governor, Carrié, and demanded a new constitution. Carrié stalled for time until Hérard himself came from Port au Prince, with an army to handle the crisis. The conspirators scattered and took cover, while Duarte fled to Venezuela in search of quick aid. Recovering their second wind they struck again and,

on February 27, 1844, captured the fortress of Puerta del Conde, an ancient city gate that furnished access to a store of arms and ammunition, and declared themselves a republic. Now they had a strategic advantage that enabled them to trap the Haitian commander, General Desgrotte, and force his capitulation. The victory was capped by Duarte's return from Venezuela in time to meet two more enemy onslaughts, the first of these under General Pierrot at Santiago de los Caballeros, and the second led by President Hérard himself to the very outskirts of Santo Domingo. Both armies were successfully stopped, with Hérard's troops suffering their worst beating at the hands of General Santana near the town of Ázua.

Despite these triumphs, the young Dominican Republic felt insecure and weak. The thought of annexation to some greater power was again under consideration, though Duarte vetoed it. Santana favored returning under the protectorate of Spain, hoping thereby to win a patent of nobility. Popular feeling supported Santana and raised him to the presidency in spite of the debt of gratitude owed by the nation to his rival. Without loss of time negotiations were opened with Spain in 1845 and Santo Domingo was returned to the status of a crown colony.

During Santana's tenure of office another Haitian warlord, General Soulouque, swept across the mountains from the west. From 1849 to 1851 the Dominicans under Santana's successor, President Buenaventura Báez, withstood the invader. Soulouque meanwhile fell prey to an old Haitian craving: he put a crown on his head and introduced himself to the world as Emperor Faustin I.

Spain proved of little help during this time, due to her progressively deteriorating position in Europe. A foolish and debauched queen, Isabella II, ruled at Madrid until the country staggered into bankruptcy and sent her packing. Thus Santo Domingo was forced to look elsewhere for help, this time on the American continent: the United States. It proved an effective choice. Emperor Faustin I lost enthusiasm and withdrew from the campaign.

In 1858 Santana came back to the presidency, still imbued with pro-Spanish sentiments. He upheld his policy of continued annexation until the United States grew voluble on the subject of the Monroe Doctrine, whereupon all Dominican ties with Europe were severed by decree on May 1, 1865. Before this painful moment arrived, Santana died in happy possession of a crest and a title.

Báez, too, returned to office, in 1864 and again in 1868. With a sharp eye for financial profit, he engaged in a number of shady negotiations with the United States, among them the long-term lease of Samaná Bay as a coaling station. He whetted General Ulysses S. Grant's appetite for speculative foreign schemes by dangling the idea of a West Indian bloc before American eyes. In turn, United States naval squadrons gave him protection against enemies at home. The scheme even went to the point of a treaty, signed by the United States and the Dominican Republic, providing for annexation of the latter by Uncle Sam. The Dominicans ratified this agreement in a plebescite, but it failed of confirmation (by a narrow margin) in the United States Senate.

Báez's successor, General Ignacio María González, governed by military rote and proved only mildly successful. He resigned two years later in favor of the scholarly and high-minded Ulises Espaillat from Santiago de los Caballeros. Together with the historian and staff officer, General Gregorio Luperón, Espaillat organized a model administration. But corrupt opposition forces, led by three separate aspirants—the previously ousted González and Báez, as well as a mulatto trickster, General Cesario Guillermo—nullified these efforts and took their successive turns at the political food troughs. It was only through the persistence of Luperón that these profiteers were finally defeated and forced to make way for another man of Espaillat's caliber, the priest, author, and orator, Fernando Arturo de Meriño, who became president on September 1, 1880.

A stern and efficient leader, Padre Meriño nevertheless saw

his own future only in the Church (he later became archbishop of Santo Domingo). Thus, after purging the government of crooks and parasites, he felt his task completed and prepared for the election of Ulises Heureaux as his successor, with General Casimiro de Moya as vice-president. The change took place on September 1st, 1882.

Heureaux was the illegitimate child of a French Haitian father, one d'Assas Heureaux, and Josefa Lebel, a Negro woman from the island of Saint Thomas. Though he claimed to have been born on Dominican soil, at Puerto Plata, neighbors on Saint Thomas remembered him in babyhood and maintained that Josefa Lebel had never traveled. In any case, due to the pale cast of skin he had inherited from his paternal ancestors, the boy's mother called him Lilis, a patois endearment meaning Lily. Illiterate, except for a brief period of training under Methodist missionaries, Heureaux was Negroid of feature, an Apollo in physical build, courageous, and of extraordinary stamina.

Despite his lack of academic learning, Heureaux proved an able administrator. He served a satisfactory first term and lent support to his successor, General Francisco Gregorio Billini, who in turn was followed in office by his vice-president, General Alejandro Woss y Gil. It was now that a longing, characteristic of persons once imbued with rank, overtook Heureaux. He wanted to return to power. It took a revolution to win him the election of 1886, and in January of the following year he changed the voting system and made himself dictator-president for life. Incidentally, the rewriting of Dominican laws had become proverbial during the past two decades. Since the days of Santana the Constitution had been altered on an average of once a year to suit the needs and changing whims of each presidential incumbent.

One of the headaches that plagued Heureaux as it had his predecessors was the national deficit, which became more acute through each electoral maneuver. As a result the country had for some time past launched on an economic juggling

act that consisted of borrowing from Peter to pay Paul. In 1869 a foreign loan was floated under contract with the British firm of Hartmont and Company, followed in 1888 by a loan from the Dutch trading house of Westendorp and Company, to meet the earlier obligation. In 1893 Westendorp went bankrupt, and the Santo Domingo Improvement Company of New Jersey took over the Dutch claims. All told, the foreign debt had risen by 1899 to more than thirty million dollars, with 48 per cent of the country's revenues pledged in payment.

This was something quite beyond the powers of an unschooled man like Heureaux. As the government sank deeper and deeper into ruin, a group of young intellectuals calling themselves the *Junta Revolucionaria de Jóvenes* gathered secretly in Puerto Rico and plotted the dictator's downfall. Under directions of two generals, Horacio Vásquez and Ramón Cáceres, a time was set for the assassination; a sixteen-year-old student, Jacobo Lara, became the trigger man. On July 26, 1899, Heureaux was trapped in crossfire between Cáceres and Lara on a street in the town of Moca, and was killed.

A number of candidates now bounced on and off the presidential chair, with Cáceres landing there last. Matters had meanwhile come to a boil with regard to the foreign debt, as England and Holland were sending expeditionary forces to occupy Dominican ports and seize the customs. This roused the United States to action. Well aware that Santo Domingo offered enormous resources in the cultivation of sugar, tobacco, cacao, hides, bananas, lumber, and valuable plant oils, President Theodore Roosevelt decided that this was no place for Europeans. He made an accord with the island's creditors and put the job of collecting on the shoulders of Uncle Sam. A special treaty to this effect was signed in 1907 and revised some years later. Under it, the United States administered and collected Dominican customs until 1941.

In the meantime, a new element worked its influence upon a nation already polygot in culture and cosmopolitan of origin. Upon the almost forgotten Arawak-Taíno base, Spain had

implanted her strong roots, which later blended with alien and ineradicable African strains. A surface coating of French manners and tradition had added the piquant Creole touch. But now another heartbeat was felt in the Caribbean. Its tempo was related to the British, already familiar to West Indian shores, but there was a difference. The Yankee child of Mother England had a strong pulse, for through its veins coursed the rejuvenated blood of an autumnal Europe.

CHAPTER 8

THE UNITED STATES MARINES

THE occupation of Santo Domingo by United States forces was illegal and not to be justified on any moral score. It had been engineered through a technicality, when the country's changing administrations failed to meet specified deadlines for installments on the debt. While such defection called for protest and possible punitive sanctions, it did not warrant invasion.

The Marines landed on a beach near the ancient fortress of San Gerónimo on November 29, only three weeks before Woodrow Wilson's probing of World War I battle aims. American participation in that conflict was imminent, hence the interests of a few private banking houses were not half so important as the acquisition of bases in the Caribbean. Nothing could have been more welcome to Washington authorities than Santo Domingo's procrastination about the debt; it provided the handiest of pretexts for moving in, an act that contributed to Latin America's already intense resentment of Uncle Sam's imperialism.

Not every aspect of the Marine occupation was bad. The general level of living was considerably raised by reforms in the school system, improved sanitation, the building of hospitals, roads, bridges, and other public works. Ports were dredged, widened, and made navigable for greater tonnage, while the chaotic postal service was overhauled and made to work with matchless efficiency. A new police force established order, and government expenditures began to balance. But the abuses still outweighed the gains. According to press reporter Melvin K. Knight, whose information agreed with an investigation made

by the United States Senate, Santo Domingo suffered the same highhanded treatment that was accorded some years later to Nicaragua. Since military rule had been proclaimed, all civil laws of the land were suspended and public properties were seized for use of the occupation forces. Any Dominican who voiced dissent against such procedure was jailed as a "rebel." Writers, doctors, politicians, statesmen, even priests were sentenced or shot without trial, while elections were supervised by a constabulary under United States officers. Former President Juan Isidro Jiménez fought such measures, as did his successor, Francisco Henríquez y Carvajal, but their protests were ineffective. Three successive American commanders, Knapp, Snowden, and Robison, held the country in submission while speculators poured in to exploit the sugar and tobacco lands. Some of these businessmen came from Dixie, where they were accustomed to Negro field hands. Since Santo Domingo's wars with Haiti had made African blood repellent, the country's population prided itself on the preponderance of pure Spanish stock. But U.S. planters knew the difference in costs between white and black labor; hence they willfully trampled Dominican feelings by importing hordes of impoverished Negroes from the Haitian hinterland. The racial problem growing from this practice was to lead to tragic repercussions carried into our own day.

Incidentally, in addition to Santo Domingo's insolvency, which led originally to U.S. intervention, the occupation forces contracted debts of their own, which were cheerfully charged against generations of Dominicans yet unborn. The Marines had to be fed and housed, while various official commissions sent from Washington at different times required special services, not to mention the upkeep of supervisory bureaus, and so forth; in short, repeated loans were made by American banks so that Santo Domingo might meet these costs. The sums were as follows: in 1918, $4,000,000; in 1921, $2,000,000; in 1922, $10,000,000 for payment of pre-occupation commitments (later that same year, two more loans of $450,000 and $10,000,000

were found necessary). It must be remembered that none of this money reached Dominican pockets, for the spending of it lay strictly under control of the occupying authorities.

Commercially the American invasion did not bring the prosperity that Washington economists had foreseen, though this was not Uncle Sam's fault. World-wide depression followed in the wake of Europe's armistice, cutting down purchasing power abroad. Santo Domingo's production was up as never before, but her products piled up unwanted on her docks.

With the need for West Indian bases at an end, the Marines were withdrawn in 1924, but a rear guard of American officials was left on the island to control the collection of customs duties and to look after the interests of U.S. creditors. This arrangement remained in force for another six years.

With the departure of the occupation troops, the open season for presidential aspirants (without U.S. sponsorship) was on. Among ardent contenders was the aging General Horacio Vásquez, who succeeded in carrying the election. In keeping with long-standing practice, he promptly revised and amended the Constitution to extend his term until 1930, or two years beyond the time for which he had been elected. Then, as this closing date in office neared, he switched back to the previous four-year term but eliminated the ban on re-election, and simultaneously proclaimed himself a candidate for the next term.

The trick, often employed in the past, did not work. First of all, Vásquez was disqualified because of his advancing age, which left him unequal to the task of pulling the country out of its chronic doldrums. With Negro laborers working on American sugar plantations throughout the island at twenty cents a day, Dominicans would be a thousand years getting out of debt. Vásquez had neither the vision nor the physical strength to enforce imperative reforms. It took young and courageous men to fight an ingrained wrong.

Secondly, Vásquez hoped to stay in power by means of trickery, and Santo Domingo had grown tired of his subterfuges. So long as human beings nurtured ambitions in their breasts,

there would be ruses and manipulations for the attainment of political power, to be sure. This was true on a tropic island as it is anywhere else. But there is a limit beyond which the patience of voters will not stretch. Old Vásquez had simply worn through that limit.

A name began to be heard among the growing opposition party: it was that of General Rafael Leónidas Trujillo y Molina, chief of the armed forces. He was born on October 24, 1891, at San Cristóbal on the river Nigua, less than forty miles from the capital. Early in 1930, before he was thirty-nine years old, Trujillo entered the political arena.

Since the stature of this Dominican figure looms as vividly on the canvas of Caribbean history as the impact of Franklin Delano Roosevelt has marked the past two decades of political events in the United States (significantly, both Roosevelt and Trujillo shared a notable endurance in office) a detailed review of the so-called *Era de Trujillo* seems requisite to an understanding of the island's progress in our own day. The subject is a complex one, for not only does Trujillo embody the most fearless foe of communism in the Western Hemisphere, but his was also the first Latin American government that declared open hostilities upon the Axis forces in World War II.

CHAPTER 9

ERA DE TRUJILLO

IN THE Dominican Republic it is easier to disregard a pebble in one's shoe than to escape the name of Trujillo, which is heard or seen at every turn. Rural children shout, *"Viva Trujillo!"* to passing cars; maps display the name assigned to cities, villages, and streets throughout the land; monuments sprout like mushrooms; and crudely painted signs on mills and warehouses hail the President of the Republic. Indeed, in private conversation it is necessary only to say "he" to be completely understood.

No account of Dominican affairs can avoid discussion of this all-pervasive personality. General Rafael Leónidas Trujillo Molina has been called everything from a bloodthirsty tyrant to the benefactor of his country. There is nothing novel in the emergence of a public figure who evokes both adulation and anathema; our own era offers such examples as Roosevelt, Chiang, Churchill, and Perón. With them Trujillo shares the fate of being adored or reviled by abysmally uninformed people, who prefer labels to analysis, predigested notions to investigation, and name calling to sober reflection.

Since 1930, when he was first elected president, General Trujillo has permanently marked the pages of Dominican history. At the expiration of his first term he was re-elected in 1934, and was succeeded in 1938 by Juan B. Peynado, who in turn gave way to Dr. Manuel de Jesús Troncoso de la Concha. In 1942 Trujillo again was chosen to head the government, and has remained in office up to the present writing. During the four years in which Peynado and Troncoso occupied the presidential chair, Trujillo was ambassador-at-large; it was in

this capacity that he negotiated the Trujillo-Hull pact, which brought about Dominican financial independence. It is perhaps unnecessary to add that in his first two terms he had so solidly built his political fortress and so firmly won the co-operation of his people that, even though not continuously the president, he has been the dominant public force ever since 1930.

Most of the so-called Latin American "revolutions" are mere struggles between power-hungry individuals, and are not revolutions at all in the sense that they represent a general upheaval or indeed inspire in the people more than a cynical shrug. Trujillo can be said to have been a revolutionist in that he profoundly altered the Dominican way of life and, by passing on to his people a fairer share of the proceeds of their labors, not only improved their living standards but stirred them to a political consciousness and a fanatical devotion to him that has not waned one whit through the intervening years.

Following a series of fumbling administrations, he enunciated the revolutionary principle that thenceforth the nation would go to *work*. His government, he announced, would be made up, not only of able men, but also of industrious men; there would be no room for drones. The resultant general housecleaning bred a great many enemies who are still sedulously trying to stir up in other Latin American nations sufficient anti-Trujillo sentiment to launch a force against the Dominican Republic on the pretext that Trujillo is bent upon expansion. This group represents virtually the sole inflamed opposition. There are Dominicans who deplore the pomp that surrounds Trujillo, just as there are those who object to the dictatorship principle *per se*. Some planters feel that they are being saddled with exorbitant taxes, as do many retailers. The Communist party, the world over, hates a regime that will not for one moment tolerate its ideas or its practitioners. But the fact is that Trujillo has not set class against class; he has not exploited capital to give to labor, or vice versa; and there is no such thing as a race issue. Hence he has for opposition no ag-

grieved, determined bloc save those who were swept out to make room for achievement.

Few presidents in our day have started their terms under such a malign star. He took office during the first impact of the world-wide depression. With a foreign debt of twenty million dollars, Dominican income in 1930 dropped from fifteen million to seven million dollars. To make matters really hopeless, two weeks after he assumed office the capital was utterly destroyed by a hurricane, which, while providentially leaving intact the early Spanish ruins, flattened everything modern. The gospel of work became far more than a campaign promise.

President Trujillo, according to one of his prominent cabinet members, is the hardest worker of all, a man of indefatigable energy with a retentive memory and a passion for details.

"In the old days," says Sr. Frank Parra, Minister of National Economy, "cabinet members appeared at their desks about ten o'clock, went out for coffee about eleven, returned a few minutes before one, signed whatever mail was going out, and called it a day. Now a cabinet member is in his office by seven thirty A.M. and he works straight through until one thirty. Although officially there are no afternoon office hours, you will find each minister practically every day in his office from four or five until six or seven.

"The minute the President gets word of anything wrong anywhere in the country that is connected with my department, I get the one-word message, 'Investigate!' That doesn't mean next week or even within the hour; inside five minutes after I receive such a message an inquiry is in progress. Within a short time I am asked for a report; there isn't a single detail that slips the President's memory. I must know the contents of every letter received or sent by anyone in my department, because I am almost sure to be queried about it.

"Watch President Trujillo leave for a short holiday, and you will see under his arm a bulging portfolio stuffed with important papers. His job is his life, yet when he does relax he

has enormous gusto, great social charm, and an almost boyish delight."

The opinion of a cabinet minister could be expected to be most complimentary. However, it is a simple matter to leave the field of opinion and look briefly at what has been accomplished under the Trujillo regime.

That the policy of working hard and reducing graft has borne fruit is strikingly apparent. The Dominican Republic gives ample evidence of material progress, far beyond that of some other neighbor nations. The rural school program, for example, dots the most remote sections with one-room schools that formerly did not exist. Hospitals have sprung up, staffed by native doctors and nurses trained in the excellent medical school of the National University. A network of good highways is quickly connecting all parts of the country, permitting freer personal travel and superseding water and ox-team traffic for the transport of commodities. The capital itself, rebuilt since 1930, is naturally new, modern, and fresh looking. However, it is also clean and orderly, even though it has had plenty of time to become otherwise, and in certain "quaint" but negligent lands it undoubtedly would have done so.

The most conspicuous waste of funds is in public buildings, notably those devoted to the Dominican party. They have the flamboyant touch that many men in Trujillo's near-Olympian position have found impossible to resist. Allowing for size variations, they look alike in all cities, with the same gleaming white stucco fronts and the identical Trujillo quotations in raised letters on their façades. There is abundant reason for housing well the Dominican party, which is the only political body. This organization is a sort of Tammany Hall; it serves as the public-welfare arm of the national government. Its members distribute free milk and food to the poor, intercede for the underprivileged, put their influence behind programs of civic betterment, and in general interpret the aims and wishes of the government to the masses. The Dominican party

is the mortar that holds the structure together, a function it performs admirably.

Another project that, while its results are excellent, is also an obvious bid for the support of the *sansculottes*, is the transformation of an area of slums in Ciudad Trujillo into a model section of workers' homes. These neat, trim houses have modern facilities, are tastefully landscaped, and in every detail are calculated to increase the workers' self-respect. Government officials pridefully point out the contrast between the model colony and the adjacent district, which has thoughtfully been left in its contrasting slumhood.

But there are other enterprises that are devoid of flag waving and personal puff, the things that do not burst forth on page one as examples of peerless leadership. Such an endeavor is the water supply, an undertaking of several years' duration.

President Trujillo is a man of the people. He knows what it is to till a farm, to see the national income support official sybarites while the humble folk die by the hundreds because of polluted drinking water. Egotist or no, dictator if you wish, he is a man who earnestly wants to better the lot of the common people. That is why he made up his mind years ago that every man, woman, and child in the country should have access to pure water, and why he has so tenaciously pursued that plan.

The Lock Joint Pipe Company in 1948 completed a ten-million-dollar contract to supply water to some eighteen communities, and has signed a new fourteen-million-dollar agreement to do the same for twenty-eight others. The contract specifies that, if the company does not deem it advantageous to run conduits to small settlements, it must install windmills and water tanks. Upon completion of the program, fresh, pure water will be conveniently close to every Dominican. Any reader familiar with the usual Latin American situation as regards pure-water supplies cannot fail to be impressed with this really patriotic humanitarian project.

A taxi driver is authority for the statement that in his

younger days a social party was a failure if nobody was killed before it was over. Making all necessary allowances for story embellishment, the yarn has more than an element of truth, for in previous years there was a distinct lack of personal discipline and broils were the trimmings of social affairs. Petty thievery was rampant, "muggings" were not unknown, and human life was a very low-priced commodity. Under Trujillo the criminal gets short shrift. The judiciary has been overhauled, the police force greatly improved, and punishments made sure and drastic. As a result, the streets of any Dominican city are safer at night than those of a small American town, and crime has been sharply decreased.

In international affairs, the Dominican Republic was able to make valuable contribution to the welfare of the harassed citizens of Europe. With an area of about twenty thousand square miles and a population of some two million, it was obvious that room could be provided for the dispossessed. Accordingly, at the July, 1938, conference at Evian, France, convened to discuss the disposition of refugees, the Dominican representative announced that his country would take up to a hundred thousand. Here was something tangible, much more than lip service to a world cause.

It is also noteworthy that Santo Domingo was the first Latin American nation to declare war on the Axis, this coming within the week that the United States took such action. The price was the early loss of the entire navy and merchant marine, which were victims of German submarines.

The agricultural-betterment program, dealt with in another chapter, has done much to improve the lot of the average native, as has the law stipulating that a minimum of 70 per cent of all industrial employees must be Dominican.

Here, then, is ample evidence that the current administration is doing its level best to raise the nation's living standards. The most superficial comparison with those standards in other Caribbean countries reveals a huge credit balance on the Dominican side.

There have been episodes to deplore. Trujillo got his name for bloodthirstiness as a result of the 1937 "incident," when border Dominicans rose up against incursive Haitians who were stealing their cattle, despoiling their women, and burning their crops. Troops were sent to the frontier, and hundreds of Haitians were slain. While no attempt is made to condone this slaughter, let it be considered that Santo Domingo has twice been completely overrun by its neighbors and remembers all too well the frightful massacres perpetrated by the Haitian marauders. Haiti has only half the territory that the Dominican Republic has, with twice the population; the Dominican living standard is much higher; and mutual distrust springs both from the history of invasions and from the disparity in language and culture. Haitian pressure at the border is constant and must be vigilantly checked. The wonder is not that it happened in 1937, but that it has not happened oftener.

It is also regretted by many that on January 11, 1936, the name of the capital was changed from Santo Domingo to Ciudad Trujillo. A man who has done as much for his country as has Trujillo needs no such sop to his ego; indeed, it harms him more than it helps him. It is a matter of record that he wrote lengthily and vehemently to protest against this change, which, according to his statements, was made against his will.

That is less ridiculous than it may sound. We are all familiar with the technique of the "strong man" while he is consolidating his position—the organized demonstrations of wild enthusiasm, the coining of watchwords, the sycophancy of those who come along for the ride. But once the leader is established, if he actually accomplishes reforms by which the people benefit, the demonstrations become real and he is held in deep affection. We have had a good example of that here in the unquestioning devotion of great segments of our people to Franklin D. Roosevelt, who in their view could do no wrong. We didn't paint his name on fences and buildings, but we are not Latin Americans, who love to publicize their heroes. Much of the Trujillo enthusiasm is entirely genuine, beyond the ne-

cessity of any administrative adrenalin. On one hillside near the Haitian border is a sign reading "God and Trujillo." The questionable taste of such a slogan has long incensed many Dominicans, and the government periodically removes the sign, but it consistently reappears. Thus, while the capital's change of name was probably conceived by men wishing to curry favor, it was a move very popular with the masses. It is entirely possible that Trujillo was sincere in his objections, but it would take a man of Lincolnian simplicity not to be flattered by it and absolutely refuse to lend his name to such a project.

Certainly he has been a successful administrator, and his countrymen keep returning him to office. To quote Sr. Parra again, "If you owned a company that for years had operated in the red, and you hired a manager who made money for you year after year, would you fire him?"

The Land

CHAPTER 10

GEOGRAPHIC DATA

THE name of Santo Domingo, which once belonged to the whole island of Haiti or Quisqueya, came in time to signify only the eastern portion (two thirds of the entire area) of La Española. To eliminate all further confusion with past terminology, the country calls itself today the Dominican Republic. When this name is employed, no doubt remains that the Spanish-speaking portion of the island is referred to.

Among foreigners, particularly those of literary bent, the hybrid though beautiful term Hispaniola survives. Many Dominicans resent it, in the mistaken belief that it is a false Hollywood invention, without logical derivation. But scholars among them realize that as far back as 1493 (one year after the Discovery!) the navigator Antonio Gallo employed this name. During the next hundred years the following authorities followed his example: Bergoma (1503), Ptolemaeus (1513), Mercator and Hondius (1538), Münster (1540), Ortelius (1560), Lock (1582), Hakluyt (1582), and Montanus (1593). Needless to say, Sir Francis Drake and his contemporaries knew the adjective "hispanic" to be a normal part of their professional vocabulary. Its Latin origin lent itself logically to the formation of a gallant substantive: Hispaniola. Hence the survival of this term throughout the pirate records that have come down to our time.

Specifically, the Dominican Republic measures 19,333 square miles or an area comparable to Vermont, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island, while the Republic of Haiti is somewhat larger than Vermont alone. The dividing line between the two coun-

tries runs north and south over the great central mountain ranges, along the upper stretches of the Artibonito River, and southward between the salt lakes of Enriquillo and Étang Saumâtre. An international automobile highway has been laid out all along this line, from Monte Cristi in the north to the southern tip of Pedernales where the border runs into the sea. Above the Sierra de Neiba ranges this road is paved and passable at any season of the year, but in the area to the south, travel can be recommended only in dry weather. At all points, whether over macadam or dirt road, the International Highway offers a scenic panorama of impressive beauty, awe, and drama, for here are the Alps of the Caribbean! Alone in the West Indian world, this island presents a landscape of continental majesty, with frosty temperatures on mountain peaks that look down from a height of ten thousand feet upon mellow, temperate valleys, scorched desert dust, and seething jungle—the globe itself in miniature.

Surrounded on its remaining sides by sea, the Dominican Republic is washed by Atlantic breakers all along its northern coast, where dazzling white beaches await recognition as the New World's choice Riviera. To east and south hard coral rocks abound, permitting only rare stretches of strand on which Caribbean waves roll gently landward. The coral wall is steep, and here the sea has enormous depth (the deepest known spot in the Atlantic Ocean, 4,561 fathoms or approximately five and a half miles, lies off Puerto Rico and the eastern Dominican coast).

"Es esta la tierra más bella bajo los cielos!" ("This is the fairest land under Heaven!") wrote Christopher Columbus to Ferdinand and Isabella after stepping ashore on the second largest island of the Greater Antilles. Cuba alone is bigger. But he was not thinking of size. His eyes had fixed on the incredible horizon that promised untold surprises. Columbus himself did not have time to cross every mountain system: the Northern or Septentrional (named after the seventh star in the Big Dipper) ranges, the vast Cordillera Central, the sharp

Sierra de Neiba, and the Baoruco Mountains in the arid southwest. He could not follow to their source the mighty rivers: the Yaque del Norte, that pours into Monte Cristi Bay; the Yuna, spreading eastward in an estuary that transforms the peninsula of Samaná into an island; the Ozama, whose mouth had been widened and dredged to form the country's principal harbor, and the Yaque del Sur, that must feed the sporadic tributaries trickling into the torrid zone.

For today's traveler all this is accessible. Over a network of roads that branch off the Carretera Nacional, or National Highway, the mountain towns may be reached, surrounded by forests of long-needled fir, and with a view in the distance of Pico Trujillo, 10,319 feet, the highest elevation in the West Indies. Throughout this area warm clothes and blankets are necessary at night, even in summer. Yet a day's journey away, there is Lake Enriquillo, 135 feet below sea level, surrounded by salt marshes and parched coral desert over which the ocean once played. To the far east lies the hot sugar country of Seibo, Altagracia, and Macorís, while the north boasts the valleys of La Vega Real or Royal Meadow—and a vast area by the Indian name of Cibao—reputedly among the world's outstandingly fertile regions.

Despite such extreme variations in topography and scenic aspect, the island is blessed with a year-round mean temperature of 77 degrees Fahrenheit. Summer and winter, there is always a movement of air as trade winds sweep the island from north to south, whipped on occasion into a September hurricane. This constant breeze, combined with the extraordinary cleanliness of Dominican cities, discourages insect plagues that formerly harassed the land. The luxury hotels, like the Jaragua in Ciudad Trujillo, serve meals on open terraces without screens to mar the view, for the atmosphere is too limpid and air fanned to suit flies or other noxious bugs. Mosquito netting is on hand for nervous tourists to throw over their beds, but this precaution is superfluous except in swamp areas like Samaná.

If the air is clean of pests, the ground produces its quota of tropic fauna, particularly in the older sections of towns, among ruined walls and ancient gardens. There are no poisonous snakes, but scorpions, tarantulas, and centipedes exist in nightmare sizes, and termites flourish in woodwork and trees, though no visitor is likely to encounter any of these ominous creatures. Sanitary measures, particularly in the capital, are very strict. Few cities in the world can boast of streets and sidewalks more fanatically swept than those of Ciudad Trujillo, and the country's consumption of insecticide has become legendary. By the same token the customary tropic diseases endemic to Latin America—malaria, yellow fever, and amebic dysentery—occur about as frequently as they might in Cincinnati, Ohio. From the standpoint of health no country below the Rio Grande can match the record of the Dominican Republic in the two decades of its most recent progress.

For the traveler there are no special warnings, except for a universally valid admonition that should be obeyed everywhere in the world: on foreign soil, drink only boiled or bottled fluids. This does not mean that piped water in every land outside the United States is unsafe. Far from it. The Dominican Republic in particular has made great strides in testing and purifying every source of city water, even in so remote a spot as Barahona. But though water in a strange land be as safe as at home, *it is not the same,* hence its effects—if any—may prove undesirable. Experienced travelers are of course conditioned to changes of diet and contact with micro-organisms that belong to other climes, hence they are seldom allergic to attack upon palate or bloodstream. It is the newcomer who must watch his step, simply because he has not built up resistance to any but the germs that flourish in his own community. Among Americans, that resistance is not much to boast of in any case, when the inroads of polio—a scourge more abundant in the United States than anywhere on earth—do not seem to diminish with the years. The point to remember

is that on leaving the dangers of one's own back yard it is wise to move carefully in one's neighbor's.

A second precaution is enjoined upon all who visit tropic or subtropic lands, including Florida. A fungoid skin disease called impetigo thrives in warm, dampish regions. Ordinarily trivial, it can become virulent and even fatal if neglected. Millionaires headed for Miami or maiden schoolmarms navigating the Caribbean should tuck a jar of impetigo salve in their toiletries kit. It won't be used once in a dozen trips. But when it must be used, it ought to be instantly available.

Beyond this there are no travel preparations except the gayest to keep in mind. For the feminine vacationer, crisp, colorful, summery playclothes are in order, with light wraps for evening, and sturdy, medium-weight tweeds for mountain trips. Men wear white suits or light shades of worsteds, even at funerals. Only the rainy season brings out the Navy blues and Oxford grays. Evening clothes, in diplomatic circles, are full dress or uniform, while the male country-club set favors white tuxedo jacket and cummerbund. Since serious-minded business travelers find themselves inevitably beguiled by the soothing climate and the relaxed tropic mood, their wardrobe need not differ too much from that of the pleasure seekers. One thing alone should be remembered: all Latin countries disdain the informality of Hollywood, where women go shopping in slacks and men appear on dance floors in shirt sleeves and no ties. Dominicans wear and enjoy leisure-time fashions, but they confine such apparel to beaches and swimming-pool terraces.

Native costume has disappeared from Dominican life, if it ever existed. Originally the colony had continued the dress traditions of Spain, superimposed on Taíno loincloth and tunic. But independence from the motherland soon did away with period fashions of Andalusian or Castilian cut. Also, being a republic, Santo Domingo rejected anything smacking of regional or peasant garb. It is useless to look for class distinction in terms of costumery or masquerade. Country folk wear what

townspeople do, except less of it. The poor follow the fashions of the rich, in cheaper manufacture. In short, the difference lies in economic circumstances, in occupational requirements (the farmer's leather belt and machete, the sugar planter's big straw hat, the country woman's turban or kerchief), and in racial characteristics. Because of much mingling, during the years of slave traffic and the Haitian invasions, many Dominicans—especially in rural areas—have a complex inheritance of Indian, African, and European blood. Where the African predominates there is atavistic survival of kraal customs, the tomtom, voodoo ritual (though this is restricted and officially discouraged), and love of colorful dress. Here is the origin of so-called Caribbean types: women who walk with gigantic baskets of produce on their heads, and men who scrape musical gourds or shake a pair of dry *maracas* in Congo rhythm. For propaganda purposes American travel posters point up this sort of thing as characteristically West Indian. Dominicans know better. They recognize the Negro's special traditions and make room for these in the national picture. But intrinsically the country is still a daughter of Spanish culture, with a language and literature rooted in the Academy at Madrid, and a preponderantly white influence that leans on tradition but is geared to the airplane age.

A land of contrasts, by all means. But never deliberately quaint. It is not a place where, for the sake of picturesqueness, jugs of water will continue to be carried, Biblical fashion, from stagnant pool to rustic fever-ridden hut. As fast as economic development permits, the veins of an efficient irrigation system pipe clean drinking water to the remotest desert spot. If primitive pageantry goes by the boards for the sake of modernization, the price is gladly paid. Aboriginal squalor looks well on postcards, while little glamour appertains to the plain photograph of a paved street. But the Dominicans intend to have more than a postcard country. Their sights are set toward progress, safe in the assurance that nature's opulence will furnish enough enchantment.

With this in mind the traveler or immigrant is made welcome, urged to look about, pressed to return or to remain and take root. Special government departments have been set up for the purpose of facilitating contact and understanding among foreigners who plan to visit the Republic. New York's telephone directory lists a Dominican Information Bureau on Fifth Avenue and a shop of Dominican curios and crafts farther up at 6 West Fifty-first Street, or Radio City. Embassy personnel and consular officials everywhere are instructed to respond with alacrity when approached by puzzled inquirers, and to furnish illustrated circulars, pamphlets and travel folders, or to recommend authoritative books. This much for assistance given the traveler before he has even set out on his trip.

Once arriving at Ciudad Trujillo, there is no need to feel stranded and out of touch. Apart from tourist guides and routine information desks at the better hotels, there is the Instituto Dominicano-Americano, with its clubrooms open to the public, on Avenida Bolívar at the northwest corner of Parque Independencia. This organization, housed in a picturesque old residence with thick window grilles of carved wood, is staffed with bilingual personnel, both native and American. Classes, daytime and evening, are conducted here in history, art, literature, music, and native dances. Periodically tours and picnics are planned for the "student" body, at minimum cost, with expert guide service and safe transportation. At Easter, Christmas, carnival time, and other traditional occasions, the group organizes a fiesta in the club patio, with processions, community singing, square dancing, and native refreshments. In short, the lone traveler need not feel isolated at Ciudad Trujillo, so long as he or she remembers this address. For the Dominicans seek cultural, commercial, and true fraternal contact with other countries and other nationals. They are an island people whose passion it is not to remain insular.

CHAPTER 11

TRANSPORTATION, HOTELS, FOOD

WITH a population of more than two millions (comparable with that of Louisiana), the Dominican Republic is economically the most advanced in the Latin American world. Its international credit is excellent; its financial policies are sound. The reasons for this are manifold, but they begin with a stroke of good fortune: the incomparable potential of the land.

Agriculture is the principal source of Dominican wealth, with more than twelve million acres of the country under cultivation and 85 per cent of the population engaged in rural development. The land grows sugar, coffee, cacao, tobacco, rice, tapioca, corn, bananas, plantains, coconuts, citrus fruits, cotton, and some rubber. It now breeds high-quality cattle, horses, mules, donkeys, hogs, sheep, and goats. Poultry farms are a prime source of income, for both the table and the fighting-cock industry. Sisal, salt, rare woods, hides, and gold contribute to the country's exports, while there is still hope that iron ore and oil may one day be tapped (experts doubt this). At present the Dominican Republic must buy from the outside world such items as chemicals, machinery, textiles, paper, cardboard products, steel, rubber goods, automobiles, airplanes, and other manufactured articles. During 1947 the country exported raw materials to the value of $83,205,993, and imported almost two thirds of that amount.

To keep pace with such possibilities, the nation has made formidable strides in education. There are some 2,600 public schools, with an enrollment of over 250,000, approximately 12.5 per cent of the population; this is second only to the

United States, with 18 per cent, and well ahead of the remaining Latin American nations.

Dominicans are in close contact with the rest of the world through an extended transportation network. Modern airdromes dot the country, with one of the best fields in the West Indies situated at Ciudad Trujillo; this is named General Andrews Airport, after Lincoln Clark Andrews, hero of the Spanish-American War. International airlines serving the Dominican Republic include: Pan American World Airways, Royal Dutch Airlines (KLM), Argonaut Airway Corporation, Waterman Airlines, Skiline, Inc., Trans-Caribbean Air Cargo Lines, American Air Export & Import Co., Chicago & Southern Airlines, Resort Airlines, Inc., Winged America Airlines, Willis Air Service, Inter-American Airways, International Overseas Air Service, Trans-Atlantic Airways, Porto Rico Airways, and, for interisland travel, the Virgin Island Air Service. Within Dominican territory there is air-taxi service by the Compañia Dominicana de Aviación, besides traffic by privately owned planes.

Interior transportation includes the Dominican United Railways and freight trains operated by the great sugar companies. Travelers, however, crisscross the island over the eighteen hundred miles of well-patrolled modern highways by private automobile, bus, or hired car and chauffeur from the Duarte Line (main office opposite cathedral in Ciudad Trujillo).

Steamship companies that regularly ply Dominican ports are: Alcoa, Lykes, United Fruit, Bull, and the newly formed Dominican Republic Line. By water the journey from New York or New Orleans to Ciudad Trujillo is a leisurely five days. By air the same figure stands, for *hours*.

Business travelers require passports with visas issued by a Dominican consulate, preferably before starting on their trip, although visas may be obtained at Puerto Rico while en route. Pleasure travelers (tourists) from Canada or the United States, if native born, need no passport but only a tourist card, which costs one dollar, obtainable through any Dominican consulate

or directly from the American Hotels Corporation, 570 Lexington Avenue, New York City. These cards entitle the bearer to a month's visit, with easy renewal privileges. Dominican money, furthermore, consists of pesos and centavos which correspond in value to United States dollars and cents. There is no sudden intoxication at fantastic exchange rates which lead dizzy globe trotters to exclaim, "How much is that in *real* money?" The Dominican Republic uses real money.

During World War II and in its immediate aftermath many foreign agents, both Fascist and Communist, have tried to use the Caribbean islands as a springboard for subversive activities. Because of this, Dominican immigration authorities have remained circumspect about all persons of European or Asiatic extraction who have taken on new citizenship. Thus naturalized Americans and Canadians fall into the same category and must present a passport and visa before landing on Dominican soil. Such a requirement is understandably irritating to Americans who took out citizenship papers more than fifty years ago and, in any case, resent the implication that their status is less acceptable than that of the native born. But it must be remembered that these precautionary measures were war inspired and for the most part dictated by Washington, where un-Americanism is still a subject for ceaseless preoccupation. As international suspicion gives way to amiable respect, the annoyances of international travel will inevitably fade away.

As for hotel accommodations, the Dominican Republic rivals the best that the American continent has to offer. A twelve-million-dollar program is under way whereby the leading island cities will be able to welcome visitors in modern, luxurious, and beautiful surroundings. The capital itself already boasts a streamlined three-million-dollar resort hotel, the famed Jaragua, a gleaming white structure with 165 outside rooms and baths, a vast private park, magnificent swimming pool, private bungalows, tennis courts, dance terrace, gam-

ing casino, indoor and outdoor dining facilities, a splendid ballroom, a beautiful roof garden, and an excellent cuisine. While this handsome establishment is operated by the American Hotels Corporation, there are smaller hostelries in town such as the Hotel Presidente, the Hotel Fausto, and the Hotel Colón. Of these the Presidente is owned and run by a Czechoslovak friend of the late President Eduard Benes, Señor Rudi Unger, whose wife and mother are dedicated to the performance of miracles in the Unger kitchen. Daily, Señor Rudi's menu runs the gamut of Bohemian and Austro-Hungarian delights, from potato pancakes through liver dumplings, goulash, paprika chicken, and stuffed cabbage, not to forget strudel, *Doboshtorte, Sachertorte,* and every conceivable tidbit that can do no possible good to one's waistline. In addition the Unger iceboxes are well stocked with inch-thick steaks, which are available at all hours with mashed potatoes, gravy, and sheer perfection in a mixed salad.

The Fausto Hotel on Avenida Independencia, not far from the Jaragua, is a former private mansion owned by the successors of the Benítez family, and operated in connection with a group of well-built bungalows facing the sea. Very good meals are served in the large dining room of the main building. The Fausto is geared to transient as well as permanent trade, moderately priced, and ideal for families with small children.

There are a number of aged hotels and pensions in the downtown area, with rudimentary plumbing and battered furniture, offset by shiny jukeboxes and paper flowers (in a land covered with year-round natural blooms!) on their restaurant tables. Here the traveler is strictly on his own.

The projected chain of luxury hotels backed by the government will eventually include every major city. Already in operation are the Hotel San Cristóbal in the provincial capital of that name, and the handsome San Juan de la Maguana along the International Highway to Haiti. Ready for occupancy in the summer of 1949, the mountaintop Hotel Puerta de

Montaña, near the highland resort of Jarabacoa, has facilities for tennis, swimming, horseback riding, and stream fishing. This section of the island is also a hunter's paradise.

Plans have been completed and the ground is cleared at Santiago de los Caballeros for a lavish hotel that will match the famed Jaragua of Ciudad Trujillo, for the northern city—second largest in the Republic, and known as the Queen of the Cibao—is wealthy and bursting with vitality. Its hospitable, busy, and exuberant denizens take pride in developing their town, not only for visitors but for their own delight. The new Santiago hotel, crowning a hill that overlooks the valley, will become a social center for glittering functions and gaiety. For the time being, however, travelers will find acceptable accommodations at the old-fashioned, four-story-and-no-elevator Hotel Mercedes in the center of town. Here, as is the custom throughout the Dominican Republic, excellent meals are included in the daily rate, American Plan.

Northward from Santiago along a curving stretch of Atlantic beach lies the European refugee colony of Sosúa, with a rustic resort hotel called Garden City. Surrounding the main building with its clubroom and veranda restaurant are a number of large cabins, each containing several rooms with twin beds, showerbaths, and proper plumbing. Sosúa had become a favorite week-end vacation spot, not only for tourists from the capital but for young and old from the nearby harbor city of Puerto Plata. The kitchen of Garden City is run by World War II exiles of Polish, Hungarian, Czech, and Austrian extraction, whose knowledge of international cuisine has been enlarged through sojourns in France and England before passage overseas could be obtained. The result is a daily menu not to be rivaled anywhere on the island.

There remain the coastal towns that specialize in seafoods: Monte Cristi, Samaná, San Pedro de Macorís, and Barahona. These spots are located at the four corners, respectively, of the Republic, and their attractions will not be apparent to the comfort-loving traveler. But in each of these waterfront cities

the fishermen's taverns serve a marine *salcocho* or tropic equivalent to the famed *bouillabaisse* of Marseille. Note: fried fish, in these latitudes—from Veracruz to Montevideo—is prepared in traditional Spanish fashion, with oil. The practice also extends to scrambled or fried eggs, a less commendable usage. Tropic peoples have an incredible faculty for absorbing fats and suets, but the Anglo-Saxon visitor will do well to order his breakfast eggs boiled and served in the shell.

A special dietary note applies to Puerto Plata, the manufacturing center of Italian *pasta* foods: spaghetti, macaroni, vermicelli, noodles, and every form of pressed or elongated dough. To visit here is to encounter the palate thrills of old Napoli.

The Capital

CHAPTER 12

THE OLD QUARTER, THE CATHEDRAL, THE COLUMBUS LIGHTHOUSE

ON ARRIVAL at Ciudad Trujillo, the oldest capital of the Western Hemisphere since its discovery by the white man, sea voyagers walk down the gangplank only a few steps from the ancient *ceiba* tree where Columbus chained his ships. Looking to right and left along the Ozama they are met by the sight of time-darkened walls surrounding the great fortress and the palace of Diego Columbus, while across the river a tiny silhouette marks the spot of Christianity's first New World church. Beside this, on a great promontory pointing out to sea, the construction has begun on the Faro de Colón, or Christopher Columbus Lighthouse, the world's largest man-made monument, cross shaped and nearly a mile in length, that is to send forth a beacon of light for every republic on the roster of the Americas. Participation in this project is by subscription on the part of the twenty-one nations, which in turn will be honored by an individual archive and library within the vast museum that is to make up the monument's interior. When completed, this architectural wonder of Indian character blended with the symbolism of Christianity will light an aurora borealis in the sky, to serve the airways of the future.

Much of that future is already anticipated by the streamlined Ozama harbor. Warehouses, dock installations, oil-storage tanks, and cargo sheds present a lively contrast to the vestiges of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, when Spanish caravels lumbered, treasure laden, from this port. From all sides prog-

ress has converged upon the old city, so that visitors will do well to study a chart (furnished by hotels and tourist bureaus) before venturing forth on an inspection trip.

The downtown or Old Section should be toured on foot. For this it is best to begin at the central square called Parque Independencia, at the eastern end of which stands an impressive bastion known as the Altar de la Patria. Formerly a link in the ancient city walls, this bulwark served as an effective defense against an attempted English invasion in 1655, while the colony was governed by Juan Francisco de Montemayor y Cuenca. From the center arch the street of San Genaro ran straight eastward to the docks, ending in stone steps that led down to the Ozama. During the struggles against foreign pirates one of the captains general, Bernardino de Meneses Bracamonte y Zapata, who was also Count of Peñalva, distinguished himself in battle, whereupon the arch was named The Count's Bulwark and Gate, while the thoroughfare became Calle Conde (The Count's Street). In more recent years the patriots Duarte, Sánchez, and Mella were entombed inside the bastion, with a perpetual flame lighted above their cenotaph.

Calle Conde is the Fifth Avenue of Ciudad Trujillo. Here are the city's more expensive specialty shops, department stores, tourist bureaus, jewelry firms, tailors, and cosmeticians. Amid aging balconied structures rise modernistic steel and concrete buildings with louvers of green glass, such as the home of the Lottery, or Edificio de la Lotería Nacional. Here, every Sunday morning, the doors are flung open for the public to attend the drawings, while the winning tickets are redeemed on week days at a separate sidestreet entrance. As in all Latin countries, lotteries are sponsored and supervised by the government for purposes of civic charity; the funds gathered through ticket sales are apportioned much in the manner of community-fund practices in the United States, with the added attraction of prizes for lucky numbers. This happy gambling feature makes it far easier to raise money, since charitableness is cou-

pled with the pleasant possibility of one's falling into a small fortune. Even nonwinners share in a dual satisfaction of contributing to the needy, while tingling for a week in starry-eyed anticipation of things to come. Sometimes there is no profit, but only a reimbursement, in which case the buyer's donation comes back to him. At other times (and this happens often) there is nothing at all, but one may see a poorly clad villager with wife and seven barefoot children hold up a mere tenth of a prize-winning ticket that will pay from fifty to one hundred thousand pesos. With the portion accruing to it, the little family is set for life. In any case, win or lose, Latins believe that a week with one's head in an optimistic financial cloud is altogether salutary. Setbacks are written off, since one would be contributing to charity anyway!

Continuing along El Conde Street the visitor will come upon a smaller tree-shaded plaza called Columbus Park (Parque Colón) at one end of which stands the Cathedral, flanked by the streets of Isabel la Católica, Arzobispo Meriño, Arzobispo Nouel, and a narrow alley called Juan de Morfa. Built by two architects, Alonso Rodríguez and Luís de Moya, between 1523 and 1541, this mighty church was raised in 1546 by Pope Paul III to primatial and metropolitical status in the Indies. As a result all Dominican archbishops bore the title of Primates of the Indies, and at one time held jurist powers in ecclesiastic matters over Puerto Rico, Cuba, Venezuela, and Honduras.

Numerous figures of prominence in Dominican history are at rest in the Cathedral crypt, but none is of greater significance to pilgrims from all over the world than Christopher Columbus himself, whose remains are kept in a special urn under a high marble catafalque topped by a bronze statue and four spires. The story behind this sepulture is as follows: In 1542 the widow of Diego Columbus, Doña María de Toledo, returned to Santo Domingo with the remains of her husband and those of the First Admiral, for burial near the main altar of the Cathedral, known also as the Church of Saint Mary the Younger. This step was authorized by Philip II, then king of

Spain. In 1795, when the eastern part of the island fell to France, Spanish patriots hastily dug for the casket of the Navigator and removed it to Havana, where a proud new tomb was set up in Christopher's honor. It was not until September 10, 1877, during repairs on Santo Domingo's old cathedral, that Father Francisco Xavier Billini discovered that Diego's bones had gone to Cuba, while the First Admiral lay peacefully in Dominican soil. Identification was definitely established through inscriptions on both caskets. Disinterment now followed, as Christopher was lifted from the church floor to his special altarlike resting place at the main entrance, near the Puerta de la Merced (Mercy Gate). Here, on October 12 of each year, the tomb is opened with four keys, one of which belongs to the Archbishop himself, while high officials hold the other three, to prevent any chance of theft (competition seems to remain hot for possession of the bones). According to present plans, Columbus is ultimately to rest in the great cross-shaped lighthouse, the erection of which is being carried out by the Elmhurst Contracting Company of New York, after the design of a Scotsman, J. L. Gleave, from Edinburgh.

In addition to the Columbus relics, the Cathedral harbors a treasury of art objects and mementoes worth more than four million dollars. Among these is a rich collection of jewelry from the court of Ferdinand and Isabella, donated by Their Majesties for the financing of Christopher's early expeditions and the building of the Primate Church. A silver carillon, from the school of the Italian craftsman Benvenuto Cellini, was shipped to Santo Domingo by order of Pope Julius II.

In the first chapel to the left of the main entrance is an early painting of Our Lady of Antigua, presented to Columbus by the Queen; next is the Chapel of Immortals, where Dominican heroes of postcolonial times are buried, and adjoining this the recumbent statue of Archbishop Geraldini faces a crucifix made from a tree that stood on the original site of the Cathedral.

Bishop Rodrigo de Bastidas may be seen in stone at the en-

trance to the sacristy, his right hand mutilated in 1586 by Drake's pirates. Empty niches to either side of the Meriño Street exit once held bronze figures of the four Evangelists and the Apostles Peter and Paul, which were carried off to England among Drake's trophies; they ended up in London at the British Museum.

Altarpieces, friezes, candelabra, and chalices of heavy gold —gifts of Archbishops Alejandro Adolfo Nouel and Fernando Arturo Meriño—occupy honored places, as these two clerics stand unique in the history of the Americas: both were princes of the Church and at the same time presidents of the Dominican Republic, the former from 1912 to 1913, and the latter from 1880 to 1882.

A variety of religious talismans and venerated relics makes up the remaining exhibits, among these a cross of now petrified wood said to have been of the species medlar or the resinous lignum vitae, called guaiacum, which Columbus held up in battle against the Indians on the Santo Cerro (Sacred Hill). The story is that firebrands hurled by angry Taínos were of no avail against this stony wood, whereupon the awestruck natives gave up the fight. Legend also avers that, as the smoke enveloped the unburned cross, a vision of the Madonna of Mercies appeared above, saving the day for Spain. It was wonderful, from the point of view of the Conquistadores, to have God—or the Holy Virgin—on one's side.

Among the Cathedral's more macabre treasures may be counted a mummified skull of Saint Clement, and the winding sheet used around the martyred bodies of Saint Fecundus and Saint Primitivus. How Santo Domingo came by these hallowed if ghostly items is lost in the dusty rubrics of ecclesiastic lore.

Architecturally the Cathedral is of composite design, with alterations marking the different periods of its history. Thus, while the all-over aspect is Spanish-colonial, the northern portico shows details vividly reminiscent of Saint Mark's in Venice. There are several huge time-worn bells, the largest of these cast in 1733, being known as La Vacante. It is so named

because this bell rang out the news of a vacancy in high church councils. In modern times its tolling announces the death of the Archbishop.

In conclusion, it is pertinent to take a closer look at the symbolic cross known as the Columbus Lighthouse, where the remains of the great navigator will rest on departing from their present shelter under the dome of the old cathedral. In moving from the cramped mausoleum to the wide, breeze-swept corridors of the memorial, the earthly vestige of Christopher's spirit will be locked in a climatic cycle of human events. For the opening spadework of the inter-American Lighthouse project represents the first peacetime use of man's newest discovery, atomic energy. That is, on April 14 (Pan-American Day) of 1947, ground was broken across the Ozama River by an atomic pellet of radioactive nonfissionable material used during ten years of previous research at Oak Ridge and in other secret laboratories of the United States. This precious substance was conveyed to Ciudad Trujillo in a fifty-pound lead box, and set up with appropriate machinery on the blasting site in the presence of top scientists from the University of Santo Domingo and the University of Puerto Rico. Among speakers honoring the occasion—with special emphasis on the constructive rather than destructive purpose of the dangerous element—were President Trujillo; Dr. Amador Cobas, College of Physics, University of Puerto Rico; Professor Oscar Cucurullo, University of Santo Domingo; Dr. Alberto Lleras, director general of the Pan-American Union; Monsignor Ricardo, Archbishop Pittini, Primate of the West Indies; Dr. J. M. Troncoso, chairman of the Columbus Memorial Lighthouse Committee; and numerous delegates from the United Nations, as well as high ecclesiastic dignitaries from most Latin American republics.

It was unfortunate that this significant and far-reaching ceremony coincided with the outbreak, that same year, of Communist disturbances at Bogotá, Colombia, where the American Secretary of State, General George Marshall, at-

tended an interhemisphere meeting. With deplorable judgment newspaper scouts concentrated on the bloodshed and violence of Bogotá rather than on the atomic spark that was to launch a beacon of world peace.

Actually the first suggestion of a memorial to Columbus in the form of a lighthouse appeared in a history of Santo Domingo, written in 1852 by Antonio del Monte y Tejada. The idea took hold of public imagination in many quarters of the globe. "Let this statue be as great as the Colossus of Rhodes," wrote the inspired author. "Let it contain a beacon to which voyagers may raise their eyes in worship. . . ." He proposed the island of Hispaniola, first land to be colonized by Columbus, as the only fitting site for the memorial, and agreement on the part of continental American republics was unanimous.

According to present plans the monument should be completed by 1952. Beginning that year, the masterful beacon will throw its powerful light over the heavens in cruciform, to guide both planes and ships. When opened for public inspection the great structure is to contain, besides the casket of Columbus, an international museum of Columbiana and a priceless historical library. On the side walls, 120 feet high, twenty-eight sculptors have been contracted to work simultaneously to carve in an allegoric frieze the history of the American nations. This may well be the biggest job of mass sculpturing since Aztec and Maya days, just as the memorial itself is the most massive project honoring a single man since King Cheops built the main Pyramid at Gizeh.

Students of architecture will marvel at the parallel between geometric Indian patterns in this structure (miniature models of which may be seen at the Historic Museum in Ciudad Trujillo) and the temples of the ancient pharaohs. They will also be impressed by the coronet of giant beacons, one for each republic in the New World, which rests at the apex of the prone granite crucifix. Here is another kind of royal emblem, a circlet of lights shaped into the crown of Freedom.

CHAPTER 13

CONVENTS, PALACES, AND A MUSEUM

FOREMOST among the historic remnants of the Columbus era is of course the Alcázar, or Palace of Diego Colón. This fine medieval castle stands on a hill at the end of Colón Street, north of the shipping docks. Built in 1510, it is still nominally the property of the Columbus family, though Dominicans cherish this beautiful landmark as their own. Earthquakes and the attrition of time have left only a shell of the old structure, minus inner floors and ceilings, but the nobility of its design remains an inspiration to the eye. Lest the shadows of melancholy rest too heavily upon the empty castle, the present Dominican Commission in Charge of Historic Monuments keeps a flock of handsome imported pigeons nesting in the open archways. A special custodian looks after the birds, keeping them fat and happy with regular feedings. Actually the cooing and fluttering of these winged incumbents lend a poetic note to the sun-drenched walls and the still, flower-rimmed gardens where a viceregal court held sway.

On the Ozama side of the castle there is a segment of the city wall with watch posts and gun emplacements still in well-preserved condition. At the northern end a deep well furnished water for the building, but it also conceals—halfway down—a secret exit from the castle in case of siege. Similarly it is said that tunnels existed underneath the Alcázar, leading to several monasteries and churches in the city, allowing secret contact between the clergy and the members of the court. Nor were

these all of a political nature; hidden passages are notoriously conducive to clandestine romance.

Below Colón Street, on the river's edge, runs the great modern Avenue of the United States Marine Corps, in honor of the unsought but highly respected occupation forces. At the angle formed by the harbor entrance stands the Torre del Homenaje (Tower of Homage) with its extensive fortress grounds. From here a chain of medieval fortifications ran about the inner city, marked at intervals by turrets and iron gates. Many of these bulwarks have disappeared as modern buildings took their places, but enough traces have been preserved to show the layout of the first city.

Walking back along Colón Street toward Calle de las Mercedes (the Wall Street of Ciudad Trujillo) the visitor will recapture much of the country's past. At the corner of Mercedes rises the first government building, known as the Palace of the Captains General, started by Nicolás de Ovando in 1502, and serving today as secretariat for many offices of state. Nearby is Ovando's own home, now a hostelry known as the Hotel América. Also, between Mercedes and Luperón, on Hostos Street, may be seen San Nicolás de Bari, the first hospital in the New World, erected in 1503; a church was added some years later. Though in ruins, the arched cloisters are beautifully landscaped and they retain a vivid mood of past living.

Another landmark on Hostos Street is the Monastery of San Francisco, another "first" in the Americas. The conventual portion was built by Rodrigo de Liendo before 1512, with the great church being added in 1555. Bartolomeo, brother of Christopher Columbus and founder of the capital, is said to have been buried here in the vault of the Garay family, though his casket has not been identified. Many figures of the Conquista rest in the old graveyard, among them the colonizer of Venezuela, Alonso de Ojeda, who insisted on his body being placed under the paving of the main entrance. In what Page Cooper calls "the arrogance of humility," Ojeda wished future generations to walk over the spot in expiation of his sins, but

he took care that the slab above his sepulture bore full statistics on Alonso the Discoverer, thus insuring for himself a place in posterity's memory. Sightseers might hesitate or lack the time to inspect the monastery vault, but if they paused at all for a glimpse through the pillared archway they could never miss reading about Alonso.

It was at this religious institution that the young Indian chieftain Enriquillo was converted and baptized. His education at the hands of the Franciscan friars gave him an enlightened view on the problems of his race, so that he brought about the first peace treaty between Indians and Spaniards. But the monastery had its tragic aspects as well. Across the inner garden, ablaze with flowering *flamboyán* trees, stands a row of cells where mad nuns or clerics were locked up, since there was no provision for them at San Nicolás de Bari (insanity in those days was not deemed curable). This mute evidence evokes a poignant realization of the spiritual strain undergone by the more sensitive participants in the Conquest.

Finally, the church and cloisters present a graphic picture of Drake's fury during his brief visit to the island. The great dome, a fragment of which still looms like a melon rind against the sky, collapsed under the weight of the corsair's artillery, while walls and sculptured columns lie in piled-up rubble. A short distance away lies Duarte Square, formerly known as Los Mártires (the Martyrs) after one of those age-old vengeance acts with which history is crowded: in demanding the city's surrender, Drake had sent a slave boy bearing terms to the Spanish governor. A hotheaded captain of the palace guards, disregarding the white flag held up by the lad, shot him forthwith. At this, Drake descended from his ship and stormed into the town in search of hostages. In vain the Governor delivered the slayer of the Negro boy into the pirate's hands. Drake had already seized two priests from an altar in the Convent of Saint Dominic (all other buildings were barred to the intruder) and dragged them to their execution.

The above-named Dominican Convent, on Padre Billini

Street between Calle Hostos and Calle de la Universidad, was also the seat of the Royal and Pontifical University of Saint Thomas Aquinas, the oldest seat of learning in the Western Hemisphere. Founded in 1538 by King Ferdinand and generously supported under Charles V, the institution became the scene of many angry debates between enlightened clergy and stubborn militarists regarding abuses against the native population. Here Friar Anton Montesinos preached his famous sermon, *"Ego Vox Clamantis in Deserto,"* challenging the conquerors who were his own countrymen: "With what right and under which justice do you hold these Indians in such harsh and terrible slavery?" Here Bartolomé de las Casas, who had accompanied his father on the third voyage of Columbus, took religious vows and became the first priest ordained in the New World. Damaged by warfare and earthquakes, the church was rebuilt in 1746, with an annex added. In 1881 the educator Eugenio María de Hostos opened Santo Domingo's first normal school, later moved across the street. The annex serves today as the City Public Library, while the Jesuit Fathers have charge of the church.

Among the old houses on Hostos Street and off Duarte Square is the cubbyhole of Pedro the Saint, a lonely beggar who wore his hair in a braid and humbly told his beads outside church doors. Miraculous powers were attributed to him as, during an earthquake, frightened neighbors prayed beside a cross over his door and claimed to have seen Pedro floating in mid-air above them. This is not at all unlikely, as the poor fellow had starved for years and could have been wafted off by the slightest breeze. When Pedro died, his retreat disclosed no hearth, bedclothes, or food. There were only the tatters on his body, the handmade rosary, and a spindly chair in which the old man sat.

Another mysterious house nearby belonged to El Tapado (the Cloaked One), a wealthy Spaniard of seemingly noble background, whose life was a dark secret. Whenever El Tapado went out, which was only at night, he wrapped himself

in a flowing cape that covered all but one eye. People whispered that he was a royal exile or else a secret agent for the fearsome Inquisition, while others believed he might be a leper who dared not show himself by daylight. At all events, El Tapado disappeared one evening and was next heard to be in Mexico where a worried viceroy hanged him. Inside the yellow house, with its balconies and brown shutters, investigators found spacious rooms with solid mahogany beams across the ceilings and rich furnishings. Among these was a mural painting of a distinguished-looking cavalier with dark beard and proud bearing, but no signature or other hint of the owner's identity.

Continuing east on Mercedes Street to Isabel La Católica, and turning left, one comes upon the famous first mud-brick or adobe building of Spanish construction, known as the House of the Cord, across from the ultramodern Communications Office (Postal and Telegraph), which contains a fifth-floor lecture and concert hall. With the customs houses, the docks, and the financial district all converging upon it, this spot crowds the mind with contradictions, as shadows of the past conflict with the feverish activity of today. For the Dominicans are not imbued with proverbial tropic languor. Theirs is a busy, active tempo.

Walking south on Isabel La Católica, the visitor will pass the Convent and Orphan Asylum of Santa Clara, endowed by the Pimentel family, whose coat of arms along the church walls was defaced during the nineteenth-century Haitian invasions. At this end of town four streets run parallel to the main avenue of El Conde; they are José Gabriel García, Arzobispo Portes, Padre Billini, and Arzobispo Nouel, dotted with small shops, old-fashioned middle-class homes, a variety of beauty parlors, tailoring establishments, and bookstores. On Arzobispo Nouel are also located the Historic Archives, open every day from eight to twelve thirty, and staffed by eager, painstaking helpers. Here, as well as at the Public Library, and in the Instituto Dominicano-Americano at the northwest end of Parque Inde-

pendencia, free information is available—including numerous pamphlets, magazines, and books in English—regarding the island's present and past.

Crossing this area from side street to side street the student of architecture is confronted by assorted churches and chapels: Regina Angelorum, Our Lady of Remedies, Santa Barbara, San Andrés, San Lázaro, Our Lady of Mercies, El Carmen, San Carlos, Altagracia, and Saint Michael's. Each of these is of colonial origin and steeped in historic legend, while their interiors are rich in carved woods, gold-leaf altar embellishments, exquisite choirstalls of polished cabinet work, and ancient paintings. Here, for the devout, is the goal of an unforgettable pilgrimage. To art lovers it becomes a field for fresh discovery.

Scholarly sightseers will also not want to miss the National Museum, located across from the Alcázar of Diego Columbus in a low and rambling structure said to have been the Viceroy's former carriagehouse and mews. This charming building, open to the public from early morning till five in the afternoon, is patterned after a middle-class Spanish residence with a large sunny patio in the center. Set against a sloping hill, there are two levels, with well-co-ordinated exhibits laid out under glass in airy rooms on each floor. By far the most important display is archeological in character, garnered from prehistoric caves and early colonial ruins. Here is the only testimony from which facts may be deduced regarding Indian life on the island of Quisqueya. Since many of the sculptured objects are phallic in essence, it is advisable to dismiss the eagerly attendant museum guide and to study the matter strictly on one's own. Primitive sex representations are highly graphic and intimate. The unsuspecting tourist will prefer to blush strictly unseen.

Beyond the museum and a short distance north of the Ozama River bridge is another landmark of vital and dramatic significance, the Fountain of Columbus. This beautifully columned and arched structure once held the city's water supply in check, during the early days of colonization. Next, driving from this point southward on Colón Street past the House of the

Jesuits and along Calle Arzobispo Portes (where the first seminary, Gorjón College, is located), the visitor will leave the inner town behind at the juncture of the Palace of Justice and Ramfis Park. Note: Dominicans have a great love for things Egyptian, both in architecture and in nomenclature. Many a little schoolboy in Ciudad Trujillo is called Radamés, while his feminine playmate carries the operatic handle of Aïda.

Continuing westward past the Jaragua and Fausto hotels, the ruined fortress of San Gerónimo and Jaina Castle come into view. These structures once formed part of a defense ring that circled the southern coast. And it was here that, in 1655, nature played a grotesque trick on a gentleman pirate named Admiral Penn, father of Philadelphia's William, during an attempted landing for purposes of plunder.

He had rowed ashore one night from his galleon, this senior Penn, accompanied by an armed escort. But suddenly the somewhat unsure buccaneers were halted by a loud pounding on the coral beach and in the scrub fringe beyond. It sounded as though an army of foot soldiers was on the march.

Panicky, the invaders turned about and scrambled aboard the skiffs that sped them back to their ship, without pausing to investigate the cause of their fright. Thus they never learned that they had been chased off by a simple tropic phenomenon; a school of giant West Indian land crabs, uncounted thousands of them, had swarmed in the moonlight for their annual shedding of shells. The sound of these eighteen- to twenty-inch armor-plated crustaceans, beating against one another in a devilish clatter, had echoed back from the hard coral and understandably put the perplexed strangers to rout. Coattails flying, Admiral Penn quit Santo Domingo instanter and raided Jamaica instead.

As for the white beach of Jaina, it became known thenceforth as the scene of the Battle of the Crabs.

CHAPTER 14

NEW ARCHITECTURE

THE modern portion of Ciudad Trujillo lies to the north and west, much in the manner of the great capitals of Europe. Northward lie most of the industrial developments, while the West End contains the new University City, the presidential home, the luxurious Jaragua and the Fausto hotels, the Capitol and other government buildings of recent construction, and the residences of the well (and better than well) to do.

For the visitor stopping at one of the hotels a sightseeing trip by bus, carriage, or rented car is advisable, as the area to be covered is generously laid out and many times larger than the cramped downtown district. Thus, rolling westward along Avenida Independencia, or its parallel ocean-front boulevard Avenida George Washington that runs past the beach of Güibia, the tourist will see the beautifully landscaped estate of the Chief Executive on the left, while a short distance across the way lie the marble and granite buildings of the enlarged university. Two of these, the School of Medicine and the School of Dentistry, are noteworthy because of a series of frescoes by the artist Vela Zanetti. The first of these depicts the development of medical science from primitive necromancy to the days of modern surgery, with a collateral representation in the Pharmaceutical College of the advancement from early alchemy through medieval herb culture to present-day knowledge of chemicals and drugs. In some of these panels the features of great physicians and experimenters are easily recognized: Galen, Paracelsus, Lavoisier, Courtois, Scheele, Agricola, Da Vinci, Pasteur, Koch, and many others. The halls of the Faculty

of Odontology follow a similar pattern in tracing dental treatment from the Stone Age through an Egyptian phase, with the inhaling of soothing vapors, the period of the Italian charlatan Cagliostro, the violent methods of the nineteenth century, and the arrival of anesthesia in our time. Here too the grateful painter's brush offers individual portraits of big names in dentistry: Mouton, Lemaire, Fauchard, Duchâteau, Leeuwenhoek, Dubois, Goodsir, Robin, and others. Persons interested in modern architecture will note that Ciudad Trujillo's University City follows the structural lines used with such distinction in Sweden and Brazil. The buildings are airy, well lighted, streamlined, and unconventional. In the clear, sun-drenched Caribbean atmosphere their pink marble columns and white planes, broken by long fronts of glass, dazzle the eye.

Surprisingly, not far from this section—on the western city limits—the capital's stockyards and abattoir occupy an equally modernistic white building complex that on first glimpse resembles nothing so much as a country club. Known as El Matadero, this meat-packing plant at the edge of the sea is unique, anywhere in the world. Actually only a stone's throw from the presidential mansion of "Estancia Ramfis" (so named after Trujillo's eldest son), the Matadero is spotless, odorless, scrupulously hygienic, and surrounded by extensive landscaped grounds. From here refrigerated trucks carry fresh meat, cured ham, bacon, sausage, and other products to every point in the Federal District. Also on this outer border of the town a new brewery has opened its plant, keeping the architectural form of the university buildings, so as to introduce no jarring note.

At the end of Güibia Beach a paved road called Avenida Máximo Gómez runs at right angles to George Washington Boulevard and leads northward to the airport. Between this road and the central plaza of Parque Independencia are such streets as Cordell Hull, Mexico, Bolívar, Uruguay, Pensón, Pasteur, etc., where private homes alternate with apartment houses, embassies, consulates, a new air-conditioned motion-picture theater, and several clubs. A fine new country club, in-

cidentally, was only recently opened beyond the western city limits, off the road to San Cristóbal; here the Ciudad Trujillo élite, local and foreign, gathers for carnival celebrations, patriotic fiestas, and the inexorable riot that is New Year's Eve.

North of Parque Independencia begins the working man's city, dotted with shoe factories, garages, industrial plants, labor-syndicate buildings, and the new workers' homes that are fast replacing former slums. The area is sharply defined by the angle of Alfonseca Street (which becomes Carretera Duarte or the National Highway going to Santiago) and Avenida Mella, the Dominican Broadway. Here can be observed the life of the teeming masses. On Mella Street, running a diagonal parallel with El Conde in the center of the Old Town, is the excellent new market hall, a high-vaulted structure of newest design. Concrete floors and well-built stalls ensure proper handling of foodstuffs, while separate compartments are rented to basket weavers, pottery vendors, hatmakers, and other dealers in native crafts. Daily the entire market is scrubbed and flushed with a hose to ensure maximum cleanliness. Shopping hours run from eight to four, including Sundays.

At right angles to Mella Street runs Avenida Trujillo Valdez, another low-price shopping center, named after the father of the President. Clean, modern busses run along this four-lane thoroughfare and make a circuit through public parks, playgrounds, factory districts, native cabarets, and the racetrack known as the "Hipódromo Perla Antillana." Here is a ten-cent round trip that has no equal for substantial sightseeing possibilities.

Nightlife in Ciudad Trujillo's fashionable sector is conservative rather than spectacular. The tourist hotels furnish good dance orchestras in all Caribbean capitals, hence the Jaragua proves no exception. Furthermore the downtown bars, coffee houses, and soft-drink parlors have a steady day and night clientele, particularly after theater hours. As for the shadier aspects of nocturnal amusement there is an imitation Montmartre beyond the airport. Here taxi dancers shuffle through

the night in taverns and cheap "dives," while tippling customers make merry. At its worst, however, Ciudad Trujillo is one of the world's least corrupt or dissipated cities. The student in search of picturesque vice and depravity is due for a disappointment as, in this respect, the capital on the Ozama is actually dull.

Another sightseeing area lies across the river at the end of Avenida Mella, where the wide Ozama bridge spans the stream. Busses cover this route, but they are invariably crowded with workers, predominantly Negro, whose modest huts clutter the opposite bank. Taxis and horse-drawn carriages make regular tours of this suburb where industry is beginning to expand over once blighted swamplands. Crossing the bridge, visitors will get a full view of the river's mouth and the busy shipping in the harbor. Below, along the banks of the stream, stand countless shacks of fisherfolk whose poles and nets festoon the water front. Farther up on the heights is a military garrison and cadet school, solidly built and beautifully landscaped. From here a paved road leads to the excavated terrain of the projected Columbus Lighthouse. A huge airport, also to be named after the Discoverer, has been planned in conjunction with the memorial, with the date of completion set tentatively for 1951.

Returning over this same highway and branching off to the left, a visit may be made to the small shrine known as the first consecrated Christian place of worship in the Americas. Though the original structure was demolished by earthquake (here is the spot where the fantastic plague of ants appeared, forcing the city to move to the opposite riverbank), a new chapel has been built in accordance with documented descriptions of its forerunner. Walls and flooring are new, but the tiny church bell and the altar ornaments were salvaged from colonial days. The chapel is usually locked, although its sacristan lives nearby and will promptly be summoned by pickaninnies that seem to spring up from nowhere. For the smallest of tips the legend of Columbus will here be recounted in its freshest

and most ingenuous form. Listeners will also be startled to learn that this borough across the river is known locally as "Brooklyn."

Heading back toward town by way of the Ozama bridge and then taking the water-front boulevard that commemorates the United States Marine Corps, which runs past the harbor beacon and joins the ocean drive of George Washington, the visitor will wind up with Ciudad Trujillo's proudest sight—the monument in honor of the Hull-Trujillo Treaty which restored to the Dominican Republic full control of its own customs houses. Still farther on, in added demonstration of the country's esteem for the United States, there stands a white obelisk fashioned along the lines of a famous counterpart in Washington, D.C.

The Interior

CHAPTER 15

A WORD ON TRAVEL

IT IS often the habit of people who leave home for business reasons, or a vacation, to nullify any possible benefit they might derive from their experience because they demand on foreign soil the very things they have left behind. Many persons who fancy themselves as "world travelers" ought in reality never to go beyond their own bailiwick, since they are unable to break away from their daily routine; whether in Turkey or China, they miss the food, the radio programs, the corner movie, the hometown newspaper, the corner drugstore, and the multitude of trivia that belong in their normal pattern of life. Yet it is the need of change from this normal pattern that prompts them to invest in an ocean flight or leisurely boat trip to foreign parts. No sooner do they reach their destination, however, than the eye turns back with longing, and voluble comparisons begin. Things are so different from home! Language, menus, faces, flowers—all are unfamiliar and, by one's own standards, found wanting. Tourists who do their own dishwashing at home are particularly prone to assume mighty airs on foreign soil, where they do not happen to know their way around. Instead of learning, with grace and humility, the manners and customs of other lands, they stalk about with a characteristic expression of discontent: the tourist nose that is out of joint.

In order to enjoy all that is offered by the ancient island of Santo Domingo it is essential to divest oneself of native provincialism and to go forth with open mind and heart. Here is the scene of America's birth, the sanctuary of the American dream, the common heritage in which the entire Western Hemisphere

has a stake. To cross these mountains and explore the valleys and cities that lie between is to turn the pages of a living storybook. Here is the New World mirrored in its own beginnings—the kaleidoscope of our own past.

Not necessarily in the order of their importance, but as a tested and workable schedule the following inland trips are recommended:

1. Santiago de los Caballeros, and the great plantations of the Cibao
2. Monte Cristi, Puerto Plata, and the Refugee Colony of Sosúa
3. Cotuí, San Francisco de Macoris, and Samaná Bay
4. San Pedro and Boca Chica
5. Jarabacoa, Jimenoa Falls, and Constanza
6. Barahona, Lake Enriquillo, and Jimaní

For these journeys it is best to engage a car and chauffeur-guide, either through the hotel porter in Ciudad Trujillo, or by telephoning the main office of the Duarte Line (English spoken). Usual rates are around twenty-five dollars per day, if the hotel acts as go-between. The Duarte Line furnishes the same service for fifteen dollars plus cost of gasoline which, under certain circumstances, could add up to the same thing. By far the best educated and experienced guide in the Dominican Republic is the Duarte Line's Alfonso González. Born of Spanish parents and schooled in the United States, Señor González is a capable interpreter who has crisscrossed his country innumerable times and can hold forth eloquently on such matters as history, archeology, native music, dances, and voodoo. For persons of exceptionally academic bent there are experts easily consulted through the National University, or the Public Relations Offices of Mr. Oliver P. Newman at the Hotel Jaragua. Also, on the staff of the Hotel Jaragua there is the artist and scholar, Señor Vicioso, an inveterate sportsman

as well as an authority on Taíno and other pre-Columbian cultures.

Many more could and should be named. But what is perhaps more important to know is that in all Latin countries the Biblical admonition holds true: Seek and ye shall find! Ask and ye shall be given! Curiosity, at home, becomes a nuisance, but abroad it is the most valuable of assets. Dominicans in particular love nothing better than to show their beautiful country and to answer questions regarding its manifold aspects.

Let the visitor hang up his hat. The rest is easy.

CHAPTER 16

SANTIAGO DE LOS CABALLEROS, AND THE CIBAO

THIS second-largest city on the island can be reached in a four- to five-hour drive from the capital, over the National or Duarte Highway. There are many scenic stops en route, with food and drink available, but the latter is generally à la carte and time wasting. Practiced travelers will prefer to order sandwiches and a thermos jug of coffee or cold drinks at the hotel, the night before, and set out around eight o'clock the following morning, after a substantial breakfast. This eliminates all lunch worries and delays, leaving the mind uncluttered and eager for the adventures ahead.

The road leads northward from Parque Independencia through a busy section of town, past the new radio station, the racetrack, and the airport. Presently the verdant plains change into rolling hills, and the rushing Jaina River comes into view on the left. City homes and suburban estates have been left far behind, but the highway is not empty and forsaken, for this is indeed the principal artery into the fertile heartlands of La Española. Everywhere the ground seems rich and productive, so that even fenceposts sprout wildly amid their wire entanglements. On both sides of the road stand native *bohíos* or huts roofed with coco palm or banana leaves, with doors and windows open to the breeze. Poinsettia, hibiscus, bougainvillea, and untold other tropic blossoms drip from the eaves, while again and again a small *calvario* (the three crosses of Gethsemane) may be seen near a threshold. These "Calvaries" serve as religious stations for prayer, during overland processions in the Lenten season, and as a signal of welcome to pilgrims in

need of shelter. Often the poorest *bohíos* boast the neatest, flower-garlanded crosses, and it is an established fact that strangers may knock anywhere in rural Santo Domingo and receive a hammock for the night.

Just beyond the limits of the Federal District lies the small community of Altagracia, named after the Madonna of Grace who made a special appearance in the far-eastern part of the island, at Higüey, and replaced the Virgin of Mercies (Mercedes) as patroness of the Republic. A steady rise in terrain continues until La Cumbre (the Summit) is reached on the dividing line between the provinces of Trujillo and La Vega. Here the first sweep of the Vega Real or Royal Valley, so named by Christopher Columbus, comes into view. For more than one hundred miles this fruitful region presents a topsoil three yards deep, which rivals the best agricultural land anywhere on earth. Now vast *estancias* (ranching estates) and small farms crowd one another, and the fenceposts throw off shoots that intertwine like tree branches in an endless chain. There is much life on the highway, as country folk hurry to market, carrying enormous burdens on their heads. Men, women, and children take special pride in balancing huge trays of fruits and flowers, or gasoline cans and casks filled with water. Here are the famous Caribbean sights, the mixed Creole and African types, straight limbed, tall, and rhythmic of gait, whose sure movements provide endless inspiration for a Katharine Dunham dance work. Here too are the turbaned women, whose gaudy headdress and broad hats retain the barbaric dash of their Haitian origin. Nevertheless, this is Indian country as well. At Piedra Blanca (White Stone) the road branches off eastward to Cotuí, a sleepy town of pure Taíno origin—but more of this later.

Continuing northward across several small rivulets the great Rio Yuna, which irrigates the whole eastern Cibao, is encountered for the first time. This magnificent stream gains momentum in its progress until, a mighty system of rivers, it empties through a sprawling estuary into Samaná Bay. But on the road

to Santiago, just beyond the provincial hamlet of Monseñor Nouel, the Yuna is gentle and controlled, keeping its fierce temper a secret.

Another road fork at Rincón leads to Cotuí, less scenic than the Piedra Blanca way, which leads over narrow mountain crags, but also far safer if there is threat of rain. A short distance from Rincón lies La Vega, capital of the province of the same name, and a distribution center for the rice, cacao, coconuts, bananas, and other products of the valley. A railroad line runs from La Vega eastward to Sanchez on Samaná Bay, and also in a roundabout way to Santiago and Puerto Plata, but its purpose is chiefly the transportation of freight. A journey by this route is fraught with interest, though scarcely to be regarded as luxury travel.

La Vega, with its old church and Spanish colonial houses, was once a busy metropolis. But the automobile highway reduced the importance of the town's function as a railroad terminus and led to its gradual decline. Today the quiet streets are melancholy and benumbed, a decidedly un-Dominican state of mind. The still air seems laden with a dull but stubborn hope of resurrection, which may well spring from another direction. For at La Vega, leading westward into the high mountains, one takes the lovely serpentine highway to the Alpine resorts of Jarabacoa and Constanza. An alert entrepreneur could well make this halfway stop to the highland playgrounds a shopping Mecca, with native crafts, a good restaurant, and other urban requisites that enhance remote vacation areas. But above all, this community, founded in 1494 by the Discoverer himself, deserves to be honored for its own sake.

Only about five kilometers north of La Vega a side road to the left branches off toward the Monastery and Church of the Santo Cerro, or Holy Hill. Steep hairpin curves wind up to the mountain elevation where white-robed Mercedarias, nuns of the Order of Mercy, lead their pious lives. The church, open to visitors, is primitive in décor: on the altar an antique doll with real hair represents the Virgin, robed in a gown of embroidered

satin that was said to be the work of Queen Isabella. In the nave stands the patron saint of farmers, San Isidro, who likes to be taken out in processions when there is need of rain. A terrace running around three sides of the church permits a vast panoramic view of the valley. It was on this spot that Columbus and his men were engaged in battle by Indian tribes who appeared certain of victory until the Spaniards defied them with a hand-hewn cross that withstood all efforts to set it afire. Since the original cross reposes now in the Cathedral of Ciudad Trujillo, a duplicate has been set up on the historic mountain. Also, the Mercedarias cherish a splinter of the actual relic within a crucifix made of crystal and gold.

Descending from the Santo Cerro, the journey continues to Moca, in the heart of the coffee and tobacco country. Here the profusion of flowers reaches a climax, as the pretty little town appears smothered in blooms. But Moca is steeped in tragic memories, for it lay in the path of the Haitian invasions. Here Christophe and Dessalines slaughtered hostages on their frenzied retreats. At Moca, also, President Heureaux met with an assassin's bullet. Dominicans call the war-scarred city Moca Heróica, since heroism was long its mark, but today the dark past has given way to a bright present and an even more optimistic future. Every inch of ground in this area is fertile and full of promise. Farms and plantations rotate crops in unbroken rhythm and keep the large produce vans rolling toward the capital and the northern ports.

From Moca to Santiago the road cuts through lush savannahs (from the Spanish *sábana*, a sheet) dotted with magnificent royal palms. The provincial border is crossed at the village of Puñal, which means "dagger" and further emphasizes grim memories of another day. The state of Santiago was long the battlefield of the island, both in local strife with the Haitians and against invading pirates from abroad.

The city of Santiago de los Caballeros (Santiago of the Knights or Gentlemen) is almost as old as ancient Santo Domingo, and might easily have become the original capital of

Hispaniola. It was founded in 1500 by thirty cavaliers in the entourage of Columbus, who ventured southward from La Isabela and crossed the Septentrional Mountain Range, thus coming upon the great Yaque del Norte River. On a bluff overlooking this stream, which flows westward and north to Monte Cristi, they settled and staked out their claim. A town grew on the spot, but it was destroyed sixty-five years later by an earthquake. A new city was rebuilt some miles from the old one, below a sharp bend in the Yaque, but it crumbled five times—twice during further quakes, once in a hurricane, and twice by fire (set, respectively, by invading Haitians, and by the Dominicans themselves during their revolt against Spain)—before the flourishing metropolis of today rose from the ashes.

At each rebirth the Town of the Cavaliers retained what the French call the stamp of *espagnolisme,* a special chivalric flavor and grandeeism that implanted itself with the roots of those first knightly families. There is a mannered, almost courtly quality about the bluebloods who reign over the Cibao that distinguishes them at a glance from Ciudad Trujillo's more Yankeefied go-getters and big shots. The ghosts of sixteenth-century cavaliers still hover about the city of Santiago (Sant' Iago or Saint James) whereas the capital on the Ozama is haunted by the snappy United States Marine Corps. This difference has in no way slowed up Santiago's economic progress: the Queen of the Cibao is enthroned upon a glorious plain from which a cornucopia spills across the remaining land and beyond the world's oceans. Rice has become the main crop on the great plantations, but cacao, tobacco, coffee, and pineapple run a fast competition.

For the stranger it would seem that no city on earth is easier to know. The visitor can walk up to the nearest policeman and ask for the way to the Governor's Mansion. This, it will be found, is only a square away from the Hotel Mercedes, in the center of town. But the two-story residence is shuttered and empty, while the current young governor (Señor Victor Castellanos) chooses to live in a modest annex where, in sandals and

slacks, he is teaching himself English by writing words on a blackboard.

The same Señor Castellanos, handsome and elegant when he stops for periodic visits in New York's Waldorf-Astoria, will drop chalk and grammar, to fill the role of an amiable and eager host. Personally he takes on the role of guide in a round trip about the city, pointing out its market place, the workers' section by the river, the wealthier residential area, the churches, clubs, theaters, the new gubernatorial palace that he wishes they wouldn't build him, and the hilltop monument to peace, beside which a luxury hotel is in construction. Lastly, there is a small town plaza or public garden, with a particular bench on which the Governor likes to sit on hot nights and fan the breeze with bootblacks, tramps, and anyone else who cares a hang about joining him for a spell of confabulation. If this be government—and nothing like it seems to go under that name elsewhere—mankind the world over could use a lot more of it.

After the sightseeing tour, Señor Castellanos is not through. He will telephone his best friends, this one and that, but especially the charming Sebastián Valverde, whom Page Cooper immortalized in her book *Sambumbia* as Sebastián of Santiago, but who is also known simply as Chan. Señor Valverde, tall, blond, cosmopolitan, and at home in several languages, grew up on an ancestral plantation, and to this day continues the life of a country squire. A student of history and folklore, he can point out every noteworthy sight in his province or show visitors an authentic *merengue,* the national dance. He also knows every fruit and herb of the region, so that a tour of market stalls in his company becomes a botanical seminar. When investigating herbs, incidentally, it is advisable to exercise restraint, as indiscriminate sniffing may trap the tourist's nose in some odd palm foliage that turns out to be an up-ended broom with which the market woman has just swept out her stall. The howls of glee with which such a mistake is greeted would indicate that it has happened more than once.

Señor Valverde's greatest asset, from the standpoint of the traveler, is his familiarity with the countryside. In the company of an aide or two from the local Department of Agriculture, he manages to furnish visitors with an unforgettable panoramic view of the Cibao. If this is an absorbing experience for the pleasure seeker, it proves an invaluable benefit for anyone touring the Dominican Republic on business. Finally, as a sports fan, Sebastián Valverde, like 90 per cent of his fellow citizens, is proud of Santiago's thoroughbred horses and high-class stud farms, as well as the modern racetrack, the baseball park, tennis clubs, public swimming pools, and the *gallera*, or cockfighting ring.

It is by no means essential, however, to know either Governor Castellanos or his good friend Sebastián Valverde in order to make the most of a visit to Santiago. These two names are mere symbols for a citizenry that is renowned because of its warmhearted hospitality. The energy, industriousness, and exuberant good spirits of the City of Cavaliers have become proverbial.

Here rich and poor share equally in a proud heritage. The Governor and the tramp conversing on the park bench are both gentlemen. In grasping this fundamental truth about the heartland of Santo Domingo, the rich granary of the Cibao, foreigners will understand a salient characteristic in the country's population. Dominicans are friendly, generous, self-assured. They are never parasitic, servile, cowed. But in the Cibao they have an added virtue, for, blessed by nature's exceptional bounty, the Cibaenses are free of humanity's most rampant failing: envy. If this failing could be exorcised from the rest of mankind there would be an end to war.

CHAPTER 17

HAVENS FOR SHIPS— AND FOR PEOPLE

MONTE CRISTI, Libertador, and Puerto Plata are the ports of the western part of the northern coast. The first two are largely banana ports, but Puerto Plata has greater diversity. Its large harbor accommodates ships from all the world, and it is the focal point of Dominican trade with the rest of the Antilles. In addition to bananas, it ships much of the produce of the fertile Cibao. Proof of its continuing importance lies in the construction of new docks to increase its facilities.

In bygone days Puerto Plata handled more shipping than any other port in the land, since it was the only convenient outlet for the goods of the Cibao and the Vega Real. It was not until 1922 that a highway was completed connecting Santiago de los Caballeros with Ciudad Trujillo. Before that time, people in the north wishing to visit the capital were compelled to travel either coastwise or on horseback. Indeed, one well-known Dominican diplomat said that he had traveled to Europe three times before ever seeing the capital city of his own country.

This Santiago–Ciudad Trujillo road, by channeling a large percentage of the shipping to the southern coast, reduced the relative importance of Puerto Plata as a seaport. It is not suggested that Puerto Plata has by any means lost its commercial significance, but merely that its percentage of the total shipping has been reduced by interurban competition.

Puerto Plata is a friendly place of about seventeen thousand. Its size is of no particular importance, but its friendliness is,

because for the visitor the charm of a community may be made or broken by its people. In comparing the cordiality of Puerto Plata with that of Ciudad Trujillo, allowance must be made for the fact that the former is less accustomed to tourists, and that therefore there is greater eagerness to show the stranger all the points of interest and to make a good impression. This applies with equal force to the officials, the socially élite, and the lowliest citizens. No courtesy is too much trouble, no time devoted to the visitor is grudged.

Every town has its picturesque individualists. In Puerto Plata it is a delight to see one man who, with complete disdain for public opinion, saddles and rides his pet ox through the streets. Natives have long ceased even to notice him, but he catches the foreign eye. He loves his ox, one is told, and finds it much more fun to ride than horse or mule.

Another arresting sight was a wagon loaded with mahogany logs moving slowly through a Puerto Plata street. The law requires that at the protruding rear end of such a load there hang a red object as warning. The tough, hard-bitten wagoners had complied with the law by festooning the logs with clumps of flaming red hibiscus blossoms.

To an American, one of the most interesting people in Puerto Plata is Mrs. Gwendolyn Krippene. Born in Missouri and educated in Indiana, she went with her husband to Santo Domingo and settled in Puerto Plata, where they started an industry that was to grow and assume national importance. Mr. Krippene bought a small macaroni factory, the only one on the island, and put in the first flour mill. Soon he was manufacturing a line of paste products that found a ready market.

Several years ago, while Mrs. Krippene was on a visit to the States, her husband died suddenly. Instead of closing out the business and remaining in her native land, this gallant woman returned, assumed a heavy burden of debt, and worked out her own salvation. Today the Industria de Pastas Alimenticias is a thriving concern employing 126 people, making spaghetti, macaroni, vermicelli, and all paste products, in addition to

second-grade flour and bran. The wheat for the semola is imported. The entire output is consumed domestically. Paste products had not been used before to any appreciable extent; this factory started a trend. Now the Krippene plant is the largest of four in the Republic.

Early establishing himself as a public-spirited citizen, when Mr. Krippene started his plant he agreed to give all the revenue from the first week's sales to the fund to build a road from Puerto Plata to Santiago. It was this kind of community pride that made Puerto Plata the first Dominican city to have lights.

Mrs. Krippene is a mine of information about personalities and events in her adopted country. Naturally her Spanish has become fluent through the years, but when she speaks to anyone from home it is with all the friendliness and naturalness of her Middle Western background. She is highly regarded in the capital, where she has a wide circle of friends, both in and out of officialdom. With her abundant good humor and her instinctive hospitality, she is an oasis for any visiting American who feels unequal to the task of battling with the Spanish tongue and longs to hear his own dialect.

Sociologically, the most important place on the northern coast is the displaced persons' colony at Sosúa.

It was established as a direct result of the Dominican government's proffered refuge for one hundred thousand persecuted, homeless people. The active agent was the Dominican Republic Settlement Association (DORSA), which was organized to provide the funds to give displaced persons their start in their new home. The land set aside was by no means inferior; it is fertile and broad, and the beach at Sosúa is as fine as any in the country.

People in the capital know remarkably little about Sosúa and its operation. They will say that thousands of refugees have passed through the settlement. The truth is very far from this. The total is 757 people, and at the end of 1948 those remaining numbered 278.

The first fifty-four settlers arrived May 8, 1940. Two ship-

loads had started from Europe, bringing those they could pick up and dropping many at other places. Families agreed to disruption on the agreement that relatives of those coming initially would be brought later and reunited with the pioneers after the latter had become established. However, passage was exceedingly hard to obtain because of war cargoes that occupied all available space. After Pearl Harbor the situation rapidly became worse. Meanwhile many families escaped to other countries, where they completely lost touch with relatives and friends. Many who had come to Sosúa without their families returned to share with their loved ones whatever their fate might be, rather than remain alone far removed from persecution.

As the Allies strengthened their grip on the sea lanes and defeated the menace of German submarines in American waters, more refugees made their way to Santo Domingo. Of these, a large number already had affidavits permitting them to enter the States under the sponsorship of American citizens, but went to Sosúa as a first step toward getting into America. While it is easy to question their good faith, it is understandable that they would seize the first chance to escape the horrors of their homeland.

On the opposite page are the Sosúa statistics at the close of 1948.

Since the inception of the colony, twenty-six people have died, of whom five were children. Those leaving the Republic have numbered 103 family units, consisting of 265 persons, and 105 unmarried individuals. Others, totaling eighty-three, have left the settlement and established themselves elsewhere in the country. It is to the credit of the Dominican government that these people are not given the choice of staying at Sosúa or leaving the country, but, having entered through the colony, are free to find employment in other localities.

There have been nine marriages between settlers and Dominican girls. Of these families, seven are still at Sosúa, one in another part of Santo Domingo, and one outside the country.

COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN

	Number of Persons	
Foreign		
1. Austria	250	
2. Belgium	5	
3. China (children born there)	7	
4. Czechoslovakia	23	
5. Ecuador	2	
6. England	3	
7. France	7	
8. Germany	259	
9. Hungary	15	
10. Italy	2	
11. Luxemburg	18	
12. Poland, Russia, and Lithuania	63	
13. Portugal	2	
14. Rumania	2	
15. Switzerland	4	
16. United States	1	
		663
Dominican Republic		
1. Wives of settlers	9	
2. Children born in Sosúa	83	
3. Children born in other locations	2	
		94
		757

Besides the 757 people accounted for, eighty-one have passed through Sosúa in their capacities as officials and employees. All of these have now left Sosúa, either for other parts of the Republic or for other nations, leaving the colony at the end of 1948 with these vital statistics: 48 single men, 22 single women, 144 married couples, 36 boys and 64 girls up to sixteen years of age, producing a total of 278 persons.

Having provided passage for the refugees, DORSA then set

about equipping them for their new life, which was to be entirely founded upon agriculture. Experience showed that the minimum area for a successful farm to be worked by a farmer from Europe under Dominican conditions was thirty hectares (about five acres). It was decided to give each settler ten cows, if he were a bachelor; an additional cow was allowed for a wife and two more for each child. Special inducements also were offered for raising pigs and poultry. Each married homesteader had his own house on his farm, to facilitate his working his land with a minimum of travel back and forth.

There are now sixty-five homesteads, with twenty-eight more being established, to give a total of ninety-three, and land remains in the possession of the settlement for twenty-five additional menages. Still more land is available through reclamation.

Each settler signs a contract with DORSA, by the terms of which he agrees to repay the initial loan at the rate of ten dollars a month, which includes 2-per-cent interest and a payment on the capital. However, if he elects to pay twenty dollars monthly he is relieved of interest payments, and each installment is applied against capital. Originally the maximum loan was four thousand dollars, but after 1946 rising costs forced it to six thousand. In addition to this, in 1947 the settlement established a loan co-operative through which each settler may get a maximum credit of three hundred dollars, repayable in one year. There is also a provision for larger loans to the co-operatives that merchandise the products of the colony.

Besides giving the immigrants their start, DORSA supports such communal institutions as hospital, school, sanitation, and antimalarial measures. Efforts are afoot to gain community recognition from the government, in which event these burdens will be tax borne. Prospects of this were brightened through passage on August 20, 1948, of a new colonization law.

The farmers are divided into three main categories. One concentrates on raising cattle, a second devotes itself to dairy

products, while the third raises vegetables, mixing this with pig and poultry breeding.

Under the care of the Sosúa settlers, the cattle have improved tremendously. A start was made with native cows, which were supplying eight pounds of milk daily. New strains were introduced and excellent care was taken of the animals. Now the lowest yield is ten pounds, with the majority of farmers getting fifteen to twenty pounds a day from each cow, and some going as high as twenty-five or twenty-eight pounds.

Since these settlers are people schooled to produce more than they consume, it was only natural that in a short time they would have a salable surplus. However, Sosúa is 250 kilometers from the capital, and in Caribbean temperatures this distance militates against shipment of perishable articles. They therefore set out to smoke their own meats and to make sausage and cheese. Now they faced a problem, since hardly one of them had ever been a farmer. These scientists, artists, dentists, and other widely assorted professional and business people learned the hard way, through painful trial and error. For example, they butchered a hog, passed out portions among each other, and each tried to make palatable sausage. After sampling the various results, they selected the offering they liked best, and went on to try to improve upon it. The same process was followed in smoking meats.

Leo Goldstein, a young man who came out of Luxemburg as a schoolboy, is in charge of the meat-packing operations. All he knows he learned right at Sosúa, where he started at the most menial tasks, yet watched every process and mastered each. This meat plant started in 1945; now it ships to other parts of the Republic a total of twelve or fifteen hundred pounds of smoked meat and sausage every week, the finest made anywhere in the country. Sosúa hams, bacon, and sausage sell at a premium in the capital.

The same was true of butter. Walter Bieler, who hadn't the faintest idea how butter was made, was named to head the

butter co-operative. He started by churning butter in a spare room. As he got the knack, he instructed others, and a sprightly trade has resulted. Like the meats, Sosúa butter and cheese are prized over any others made in Santo Domingo.

Augmenting the business done in meats and dairy products, there is a notable volume of grasses from which citronella and lemon-grass oil are extracted. To handle the commerce in all these articles, three different co-operatives have been founded, one for dairy products, one for meats, and one for grasses. These co-operatives do the marketing and distribute the earnings. Under a former director, the whole settlement was placed on a communal basis, the profits being equally distributed. However, this was changed by the last director, Mr. David Stern, who held that people from Central Europe were not by training or instinct sympathetic to the idea of collectivism, and that each should profit to the extent of his production. This found great favor with the settlers, who vindicated the director's ideas of their preferences.

The hospital is staffed by trained personnel, doctors and nurses from other lands. It is admirably run and rather surprisingly complete, considering the primitiveness one might expect.

The school is conducted entirely in Spanish, but the courses are based upon the United States educational system, with the curriculum of our primary schools. The children are brought up with only one national loyalty, Dominican. By law they are Dominican citizens whether their parents are naturalized or not. Most of the parents want to draw the veil on what has gone before and forget the horrors of their homelands. They do not want the children to sense a pull toward Europe, and are happy that they are trained as Dominicans. Because these youngsters, as long as they remain in the settlement, must rely upon agriculture for their livelihood, the school has its own garden, and every child has his own plot for which he is responsible.

There is also a motion-picture theater. While its films are not

precisely of the first-run variety, they are welcome. Natives of the surrounding area may attend the theater so long as they present themselves with clean clothes, clean faces, and neat appearance. The movie in those parts has become a force for social good.

No visitor to Sosúa need fear that he will have to pitch a puptent or sleep in his car. Near the excellent beach is the hotel, another profitable venture, especially in the holiday season, when it is flooded with vacationing Dominicans. There are five cottages, which can sleep twenty-five or thirty people, and all rooms have shower baths. A large dining hall serves very good meals, which, because of the background of the cook, offer wider variety than is usually found in the Republic.

All this didn't just happen. A survey of the surrounding terrain gives a graphic idea of the huge job of land clearing and improving that had to be tackled. In addition to everything else, the settlers, with the aid of native workmen, have built thirty-two kilometers (twenty miles) of passable roads. It was rough pioneer work for which hardly one of them was equipped by any previous experience, and few by physique. Yet they have accomplished wonders.

It is obvious that the settlement is one that will be absorbed. That is its purpose; it does not hope to retain its Jewish character or identity. For this reason, surprise was expressed in some quarters when David Stern was made the director. Mr. Stern had spent twenty-five years in Palestine as an ardent Zionist. The non-Jew rarely appreciates the ideological clash between the Zionist and the non-Zionist, or the various schisms within these two main divisions. There were, however, large numbers of Zionists who could not understand his lending his hand to such a project.

"I did it precisely because I *am* a Zionist," said Mr. Stern. "The Talmud says there is salvation for him who saves one Jewish soul. The work in Palestine has moved forward and is now in capable hands. Here there was still a job to do, and I accepted the task. But I am the last director. The time will

soon be here when the colony will stand on its own and be completely self-supporting. Then there will be no need of me or anyone else in my capacity."

Since that time Mr. Stern has returned to the States and has not been replaced.

The colonists still hope that their ranks will be swollen by newcomers. Whether they will depends largely upon conditions in Europe and upon the attitude of the Dominican government, which understandably feels that the emergency is past and wishes to scrutinize more closely the credentials of anyone wishing to enter. It could be a good avenue for Communist infiltration, and nowhere on this earth are Communists less welcome than in the Dominican Republic.

And what do they think of the country that has given them haven? "The name of Trujillo," says David Stern in all sincerity, "will rank in Jewish history with that of Cyrus.

"Some Dominicans," he goes on, "resent the fact that comparatively few of the settlers who came here have stayed. They feel that the immigrants regarded their country merely as a springboard for entrance to the United States, that they don't consider this hospitable land good enough for them.

"That's because they don't know the history of such colonies. I tell you from my long experience in these matters that if 30 per cent of the arrivals stay, the colony is a success. Sosúa's record is well over that figure. By every standard, it can be called successful."

Certainly it has been heroic. It is inspiring to see what those tortured men and women, fleeing an intolerable condition, have done to remake their lives and assure peace for their children.

Prescription for anti-Semitism: Visit Sosúa and be cured.

CHAPTER 18

COTUÍ, SAN FRANCISCO, AND SAMANÁ BAY

FOR the traveler in search of prehistoric traces of Arawak, Taíno, or Carib Indian life, there are a number of rewarding side trips that lead off the beaten path, sometimes over tedious and primitive roads. One of these is the journey to Cotuí, to be reached from Piedra Blanca or from Rincón, on the Duarte Highway. Both roads branch off eastward, the former climbing over narrow precipices along the gushing Yuna River, a dangerous route during the rainy season (May to November) and at dusk. The safer approach, via Rincón, La Piña, and San Miguel, is rough, dusty, and less picturesque but altogether more advisable.

Some ten kilometers before reaching Cotuí, this second road comes to a stop beside the swift Yuna, which is already nearing its confluence with the Camú, to form the Greater Yuna that sweeps eastward and spreads itself into the Gran Estero or Great Estuary. Just beyond La Mata a makeshift ferry worked by hand along a cable pulley will take automobiles or trucks across, one at a time, with space alongside for hucksters and farmers on horseback, muleback or donkey back. During the fifteen-minute crossing it is possible to study at close range the peculiar cushioned palm-leaf saddle used by rural Dominicans. Shaped like an oversized harness collar, with thick grass stuffing held together by expert fiber weaving, this oval seat rests lightly on the animal's back and forms a comfortable cradle. In southern regions of the country, at Barahona and even as far up as San Cristóbal, tropic languor seems to demand extra indulgence, for here the padded saddle comes up high at the

back to form a fine spine rest, not unlike the yielding support built into high-priced office furniture for pampered executives. Squatting cozily in one of these club-chair saddles, Barahona natives rock along in comfort while eating their lunch of plantain and cassava cakes, or even taking a little snooze. Not so the horseman of the north, fording or being ferried across the churning eddies of the Yuna; a thoughtless nod would be his death.

Once on the other side, the traveler continues over unpaved oxcart tracks toward the lonely environs of Cotuí. Now and then a small hut stands by the wayside, with children at play. They are not Negroid, but aquiline of feature and with straight black hair. And they cry out *"Abur! Abur!"* a welcome heard only rarely in the cities, for this is Middle Spanish, out of the thirteenth century and brought to America in the sixteenth by Columbus. As in parts of Kentucky, Tennessee, and the Carolinas, where Shakespearean English survives in mountaineer colloquialisms, so in isolated spots like Cotuí and the southern slopes of the Cordillera Central the Indo-Spanish culture remained untouched by African influx. Here may be seen occasional blond natives, descended from some Basque or Catalan conquistador who himself had ancient Visigoth blood. But what is more important, apart from faint European admixtures, the rustic population of Cotuí wears a Taíno face, such as may be seen in the stone sculptures of Ciudad Trujillo's Historical Museum. They think as Indians, too. A recent visitor peering into the village church, where a costumed procession seemed to be afoot, inquired from a native in the square, "Who are those people?" The answer gave no enlightenment regarding the pageant's significance. *"Cri'tiano',"* said the voice out of antiquity, swallowing its sibilants, "Christians. . . ." To the speaker they were still obviously something new.

Among Cotuí sights there is primarily the ruined remnant of an ancient cathedral, damaged by one of those harrowing Caribbean earthquakes that roll upward from the bottomless

ocean. But worse than nature's action is the defacement wrought by pious villagers (the community of Cotuí is poor) who have replaced the cupola with sheets of corrugated iron, besides adding a clapboard bell tower of hideously trite design. For the art student only the Baroque statuary and the carved reredos are of interest, as they represent the combined theatricality and realism peculiar to Spanish ecclesiastic interiors. Here is a Mater Dolorosa with lifelike cheeks and eyes made of glass, with a greenish-white Christ, bleeding from all his wounds, stretched across her knees. Some of the saints lie on the floor where the earthquake dropped them, and may be inspected at close range, for the work of reconstruction is expensive and slow. Meanwhile, whether the holy images are upright or supine, religious services go on without interruption. A lean, black-robed priest living in a cramped shanty nearby rings out matins and vespers, and the faithful come to pray.

San Francisco

From Cotuí a winding northerly road leads to the capital of Duarte Province, San Francisco de Macorís. It is customary to refer to the latter city by its abbreviated name, as mention of Macorís leads to confusion with the important sugar area on the southern coast, San Pedro de Macorís, known simply as Macorís. The duplication of names goes back to colonial days when communication was slow, and Spanish colonists were unaware that the same Indian tribal name had been appended to different Christian saints.

The above-mentioned "direct" road to San Francisco cannot, at present, be recommended, as there is a rough section with a particularly dangerous crossing (by primitive float) of the Camú River, just before its juncture with the Yuna. Negotiation of this stretch is, for motor vehicles, a hazardous undertaking. Time will be gained by returning to Rincón and from there taking the normal route over a passably good gravel highway.

San Francisco, a busy provincial metropolis, is not unlike

Moca in design. Its narrow streets converge upon a central plaza where the same earthquake that damaged Cotuí left its terrible mark. At one end of the square lie truncated columns of a classic cathedral, now reminiscent of Rome's Forum Romanum. But the city is surrounded by rich savannahs that provide active commerce for the district, hence the restoration of this valued relic is well under way. Architecturally San Francisco offers many examples of Caribbean-colonial style, with high narrow doorways and windows, much in the manner of Panama. There are old residences in which families of stubborn conservatism have lived for generations, impervious to change. But San Francisco also has its Bohemian element, the adventurous Rubirosa clan. A son of this respected small-town family, Porfirio Rubirosa, entered the army as a recruit and promptly married a daughter of President Trujillo. This gained him a promotion into diplomatic service with an appointment to Paris, where his eyes were opened to a life unknown in tiny San Francisco de Macorís. It also led to divorce from Flor, his wife, and romance with Danielle Darrieux, French star of the film *Mayerling,* who became the second Mrs. Rubirosa. The new marriage outlasted World War II, though collaborationist rumors, which later appeared unfounded, attached themselves to the pair. However, the union did not survive the peace, and Porfirio presently recovered his freedom, only to lay it at the feet of another well-to-do lady, this time the American heiress Doris Duke. The marriage brought headlines and an ambassadorship to Argentina, but the third Mrs. Rubirosa stepped out of the picture—via divorce—within the year. To complicate matters, a brother of Porfirio, César Rubirosa, was arrested in Greece with an alleged fiancée for alleged illegal money transactions. Feeling that sufficient publicity had attached itself to this fundamentally quite respectable family, President Trujillo requested the resignation of the brothers (César was commercial attaché in Berne, Switzerland). It is not likely that their names will again be listed in the Dominican Foreign Service.

Samaná Bay

From San Francisco, the distance to Samaná is approximately 150 kilometers, but the road is uneven in quality and the last part runs over steep mountains. In addition, there are the swamplands of the Yuna delta to be negotiated, cutting down on time. Thus between ten and twelve hours should be allowed for the drive. Again it is advisable to carry a well-stocked picnic basket, though twice along the way—at Julia Molina and Sánchez—fresh bread and American canned goods may be purchased in grocery stores, while coconuts sold along the roadside furnish a safe and pleasing beverage.

Scenically the first part of the drive into Samaná Province is only mildly interesting. The eastern limit of the Cibao has been left behind and a dusty wasteland awaits intelligent exploitation through irrigation measures. The names of villages along the way are indicative of the region's character, Los Llanos (the Steppes), and Arenoso (the Sandy Place). Beyond a tiny settlement called Blanco the salt air of the sea blows through sparse grasslands, and soon the small resort town of Julia Molina, named after the President's mother, comes into view. Here, surrounded by tall coconut and royal palms, a picturesque vacation spot is in process of development. The beaches are incredibly white and clean, bathed by Atlantic breakers. Several old-fashioned frame hotels and cabañas are in operation, but a luxurious modern resort hostelry will soon be completed along the water front, to make of Julia Molina one of the showplaces of the north coast.

Continuing eastward the road winds along the wonderful crescent of Bahía Escocesa (Scottish Bay), named after the Celtic pirates who frequented its shore. Here the highway is in excellent condition, running beside the ocean on the one hand and the lush jungle of the Yuna marshes on the other. It is a breathtakingly beautiful scene, not without a certain eerie drama. The palm-fringed beach surpasses anything the

Bahamas have to offer, and may one day rival Jamaica's Montego Bay.

As the journey progresses the sense of awe is sharpened, for suddenly the road turns from the ocean and seeks passage through the headwaters of the Gran Estero, where the system of rivers that make up the mighty Yuna spreads into a yawning sea. Long ago, when the area was unexplored, people believed the eastern tip of Samaná Province to be a peninsula. Only relatively recent study of the labyrinthine marshes disclosed that the river arteries cut off this tongue of land and made of it an island. This newly gained knowledge throws light upon an old legend regarding the notorious pirate Cofresí, who plagued the region in post-Columbian days. The bold corsair's ship, loaded with treasure from plundered Puerto Rican cities, had crossed Mona Passage and entered the shelter of Samaná Bay, when Cofresí discovered himself trapped by Spanish naval patrols that closed up the narrows of Sabana de la Mar behind his back. Promptly the embattled buccaneer sank his ship and made off into the marshes in a tiny skiff. But though he was pursued, no trace of him was found. Today's conjecture is simple: the fugitive had steered his craft inland through the network of delta waters and found an exit into the Atlantic and thence to some other pirate hideout. The Cofresí treasure, however, still lies off Punta Gorda in the depths of Samaná Bay.

Near the town of Sánchez at the mouth of the Yuna a broad new ferry, operated by steel cables, is in service day and night for vehicular traffic. The crossing is effected within sight of the inrushing waters of the bay, where the clash of ocean and stream creates a line of foaming white. But the ferry is solidly built and firmly tethered in its track, so that the dangers are imaginary.

Sánchez, unlike the resort of Julia Molina, is a flourishing fishing port. Here boats may be chartered for expeditions into Samaná Bay and the outer waters of Mona Passage, where two

American presidents, Theodore and Franklin Delano Roosevelt, devoted happy hours to the deep-sea sport.

From Sánchez to the provincial capital of Samaná proper the terrain grows mountainous, as the serpentine road leads across a rocky coastal range. Small fishing villages are passed along the way—Majagual, Los Robalos, Arroyo Barril—before the outskirts of Samaná come into view. And here a surprise awaits the English-speaking traveler, for in a land of Indian and Spanish speech, colored by African idioms and the French patois of Haiti, the ear is suddenly met by familiar sounds: Quaker dialect from Pennsylvania, soft accents from the American Deep South, and crisp overtones of British English. The mystery is quickly solved. At Samaná a group of Negro refugees from the United States found shelter in the 1820's, shipped there by two sympathetic white maiden ladies from Philadelphia.

These former slaves who had escaped from Dixie plantations brought with them their Protestant faith and customs, which they implanted in a land predominantly Catholic. Forgotten at first by their own church elders in the United States, they requested help from England and promptly found a Wesleyan pastor looking after their wants. Several British ministers succeeded one another until, eventually, the American Methodist Church made up for its neglect. Meanwhile, from England, the beams, pews, and altar of an all but prefabricated meeting house had been shipped over and nailed together into a fine church. To this day it stands proudly on a hillside, ruling a pious community that rears its children, runs a ladies' aid society, sings hymns, forbids dancing, and generally lives the life of a strict sect in the heart of the American Bible Belt.

Apart from this absorbing phenomenon, Samaná offers only one major interest: *fishing*. Hotels and modern luxuries are nonexistent, though clean rooms with acceptable beds and mosquito netting (but no indoor plumbing) are available in several clapboard rooming houses that call themselves hotels.

As in Sánchez, boats galore may be rented in the harbor for day-long expeditions, and a ferryboat crosses twice every twenty-four hours from Samaná to Sabana de la Mar on the southern shore of the bay.

It will appear to today's vacationing tourist that this remote outpost on the northeastern tip of Hispaniola is of only slight importance, either as a sightseeing spot or from a politico-economic standpoint. But there was a time, a little over two generations ago, when the name of Samaná figured volubly in open debate on the floor of the United States Senate. As early as the American Civil War, Washington authorities had scanned the West Indies for possible naval and military bases to counterbalance European influence upon the Western Hemisphere. In 1870 President Ulysses S. Grant received a highly confidential report from his special negotiator, William L. Cazneau, who had been sent to Santo Domingo for the purpose of obtaining a long-term lease or possible annexation of Samaná Peninsula to the United States. Wrote Mr. Cazneau:

> From 1850 to the present year of 1870, the Washington Cabinet has been constantly reminded of the importance and feasibility of acquiring a superior naval station in these [Caribbean] seas. The chief obstacle to this desirable acquisition was for twenty years the fear of European opposition. Every statesman felt the significance of such a possession; every naval officer admitted the value of such a sentinel at the center of our isthmus and inter-coastlines of communication; every patriot sustained a measure so visibly and effectually in accordance with our national policy of progress, and none but those who carried to excess their fears of European displeasure would have believed the disgraceful truth that out of six successive administrations, five, one after the other, refused to occupy Samaná at the hazard of exciting French or British opposition. Webster was a great lawyer, certainly, and as unquestionably a sincere patriot, but he would not hear of a naval

station either at Samaná or Manzanillo [Mexico], even in free gift, because "such an advanced position in the midst of the West India colonies might give offence to the great European powers." . . . In 1853 Mr. Pierce, who had not yet had time to contract that enfeebling dread of European displeasure which seems the chronic infirmity of our Washington Cabinets, listened approvingly to the project of obtaining a permanent naval station on the Bay of Samaná at a low but fixed rent. Secretary Marcy wrote me officially, November 2, 1853: "All the West India islands, except Hayti [Hispaniola], are the dependencies of European nations and our commerce with them is regulated, not by the islands themselves and not with reference to their own immediate interests, but according to the policy and interests of the nation to which they belong." To relax these fetters on American trade and ascertain to what extent the young Dominican Republic was prepared to take position in our continental circle of policy as a really independent American state, was the object of my first mission. I found the country exceedingly rich in mines and other natural resources, but without industrial development or organization. A state struggling bravely to sustain its independence with an impoverished, unsettled population of less than 200,000 was but an infant among nations. But it was the *only American power* in the West Indies: it held a commanding geographical position in their midst and is entitled to expect the most generous consideration from our national principles and policy. It was evident that the most efficient protection our Union could give the young republic would be to create a well defined common interest which should benefit both parties. This could certainly be done by establishing a naval station and free commercial entrepot at Samaná. This opinion I stated to the confidential advisers of President Santana of the Dominican Republic. . . . This affair and my agency in it has been much misrepresented by the European press and by American

> partisans of the peculiar and untenable doctrine that the whole of this island should be considered, and maintained, as an exclusively Negro state. It was the European policy to make it [Hispaniola] an African kingdom rather than an American Republic, with a perpetual antagonism between this island and all the neighboring states which had declared, or were declaring, the principle of perfect equality of all races before the law. But the Dominican Republic was founded on the very basis of equal rights, and this, together with her constitutional guarantees of liberty and speech, of press and conscience, placed her on high ground as a truly American State. *To sustain the Dominican Republic is therefore to sustain the American System.*

In keeping with these eloquently expressed sentiments Mr. William Henry Seward, Secretary of State under Lincoln and through 1869, proposed buying the Peninsula of Samaná for two million dollars or, better still, inviting the Dominican Republic to enter the United States Confederation on the same basis as Texas. For reasons far beyond the scope of this essentially descriptive book, both plans failed.

The subject of naval stations in Caribbean waters remains, however, tantalizing to all comers, whether Yankee or European. During World Wars I and II the Germans cast longing eyes toward Samaná, just off the Brownson or Milwaukee Deep, where the Atlantic sinks to a fearsome pit exceeding Mount Everest's measurements in reverse. Here would have been an admirable coaling depot for submarine refueling, as well as a perfect trap for the luring and sinking of a dozen fleets. Only Dominican alertness, as well as the country's uncompromising support of the democracies, prevented the realization of this strategy.

In closing, a small note from the weather bureau may not be amiss. It rains on Samaná, day and night, most of the time.

CHAPTER 19

SAN PEDRO DE MACORÍS

SAN PEDRO is the important capital of Macorís Province and one of the main outlets for the great sugar empire that forms the eastern arm of the Dominican Republic. Though it boasts only about fifteen thousand inhabitants, this seaport town transacts an impressive part of the country's business.

To reach San Pedro from Ciudad Trujillo it is best to start at the central plaza, Parque Independencia, and drive east along Avenida Mella, past the Municipal Market and across the Ozama bridge. The bridge, incidentally, has a name of its own: Puente Ulises Heureaux. But no one refers to it that way. People say simply, "El Puente."

On the other side of the river Avenida Mella becomes a highway called Carretera Mella, which runs inland through experimental *henequén* fiber plantations that were started with shoots imported from Yucatán. This jutelike product did not live up to expectations, due to some requirement supplied only by its home soil. As a result large-scale plantings have been abandoned.

The road winds through small villages to a point called Jubey, where a narrow fork turns south to meet the parallel seashore drive from Ciudad Trujillo to Boca Chica. It is advisable to save this scenic portion of the Macorís visit for a climax on the return trip.

After Jubey the landscape, flat and monotonous, becomes a world of sugar, reminiscent of the Cuban countryside. Here are the outer limits of the vast *ingenios* or estates that spread

through the remoter provinces of Altagracia and Seibo. Furthermore, San Pedro is the home of the J. W. Tatem Steamship Agency, whose constantly enlarging docks have given the city a new water front.

For the sightseer the city itself offers only limited satisfactions; a fine cathedral near the docks, a public plaza in the center of the small business district, the market place, and a newly developed residential area deserve attention. The harbor life is busy, as the great eastern plains are cattle country, too, and much beef on the hoof is shipped from here to Venezuela and other Central American countries. Occasionally the presidential yacht, or private luxury craft belonging to the sugar kings, can be seen moored nearby, rocking gently in the swell of the Higuamo River, which here meets the sea. But the main object of a trip to Macorís Province is to have a look at the cane fields and the industry set up for their exploitation. To this end several side trips can be arranged, swinging in a wide arc to Hato Mayor, Seibo, and La Romana. The last named is a port in Altagracia Province, from where an additional journey can be made to the ancient city of Higüey and the shrine of the Virgin of Altagracia. According to legend a sick child at Higüey was healed when an aged pilgrim (later suspected to have been one of the Apostles) asked for a meal and shelter, and on departing the following day left a small chromo of Our Lady of Grace in a modest frame. The Virgin has since been venerated by countless devotees, among whom she is said to have wrought miraculous cures. Her picture is for sale everywhere in the Republic, representing the Mother of God in a resplendent crown, with eyes lowered over the Holy Child, while Saint Joseph stands with a lighted candle by her shoulder. Since 1922, when the sixteenth-century image was carried in state to the capital of Santo Domingo for a special coronation ceremony and the dedication of her own church on Mercedes and Hostos Streets, La Altagracia has become the island's official patroness. Returning to her distant shrine, she annually

attracts processions to Higüey and rules in queenly grace over her spiritual domain.

While detailed information concerning the sugar industry will be dealt with in another chapter, two points deserve special emphasis for the nontechnical sightseer. The first concerns a "live" museum of ancient locomotives with wide funnel-shaped stacks and toy cabins that seem ideally suited for the job of scurrying through the thick growth of the sugar fields. Polished and tenderly nursed, these tootling veterans appear far from obsolete, though each would merit an honored place in the Smithsonian Institution. Instead, they puff busily amid the cane, doing a job for which their modern counterparts would be too large and unwieldy.

The second delight not to be missed is a glimpse into the interior of one of the great plantation homes, if no more than through a garden gate or an open window. In particular, one of the smaller *ingenios,* El Porvenir, American-owned, is recommended. For here, at one end of an immense enclosed living room–veranda, there is to be seen an authentic Caribbean touch, straight out of the beruffled nineteenth century: a grand piano in a rumba skirt. The explanation for this phenomenon is simple. Mold is the bane of the humid tropics, hence valuable furnishings—and particularly musical instruments—must be given the utmost protection. Thus the fine soundbox of a Steinway, and the felt hammers within, are enclosed by a flounced petticoat of lace-trimmed muslin, properly tailored and starched into a crisp white cloud. The effect is utterly charming, as though the piano had taken on the airs of a dowager, come to tea. In a landscape that is all utilitarian and keyed to mechanized industry, this touch of feminine froufrou strikes, by its very absurdity, a magical note of balance.

For the rest, despite the fact that San Pedro de Macorís is a provincial town, its inhabitants are anything but hinterlanders. Telephone, radio, and transportation facilities keep them in unbroken contact with Ciudad Trujillo and the world be-

yond. People think nothing of dashing to the capital for dinner, a concert, or an evening at the theater, and driving back the same night. And as for the sugar planters on their great, lonely estates, they have found equally easy ways to "sweeten" their existence.

CHAPTER 20

BOCA CHICA

RETURNING from San Pedro by the Mella Road and turning off at the halfway point of Jubey, a visit may be made to the beach and resort town of Boca Chica (Little Mouth or Inlet) on the Bay of Andrés. Here, only an hour's drive from Ciudad Trujillo, citizens of the capital and nearby provincial communities spend summer holidays or week-end outings. The village itself stretches out along a white sandy beach, with the principal buildings facing the highway, which is also the main street. There is a tiny plaza with a privately built church that opens to the sea and is furnished with imported Italian statuary, altarpieces, and other appurtenances. The builder, a sugar magnate, also arranged for his future burial there, in a specially designed tomb.

Along the water front are public cabañas, rental cottages, refreshment booths, curio shops, and private beach homes where much entertaining goes on even in winter. The strand is curved and bordered by a fringe of palms, but the beautiful white breakers of Bahía Escocesa, Yásica, and Sosúa on the northern coast are lacking, for the Carib Sea does not slope gently but is bordered by the sudden drop of a wall of coral. At Boca Chica this drop is impeded by a natural reef, which creates a shallow lagoon, lapping over a land shelf that is nowhere more than four or five feet deep. The reef keeps out sharks, but it also forms a natural breakwater that allows no surf to burst against the shore. Thus the water is calm, like an inland lake, with ferns and algae growing underfoot—a feature not appreciated by queasy waders.

Big plans are underway for further development of the popular holiday resort. Two architects, the brothers Guillermo and Alfredo González, who designed and constructed the Jaragua in Ciudad Trujillo, are under contract to build the three-hundred-thousand-dollar Hotel Casino de Boca Chica, with an initial capacity of thirty double rooms and baths, besides a string of adjoining cottages. The main structure is to contain a restaurant, bar, roof garden, dance terrace, gambling casino, health parlors for massage, physical therapy, beauty shops, etc., and apparatus for supervised water sports.

Small craft offshore are available for fishing trips beyond the reef and also for visits to the strange overgrown island of jungle roots sprawling at one end of the lagoon. Here almost no soil is noticeable, as the intertwining roots form twisted channels flecked with sunlight and inhabited by albatross. A tribe of Rhesus monkeys chatter in the branches overhead, while dead branches and leaves slip down along the lianas with a strange dry hiss.

Combining a touch of the primordial with the ultramodern, Boca Chica promises to turn itself into a meeting place for adventure and high fashion. Of late it has served as a favorite hideout for honeymooners, who find the beach cabins ideal for their demands. Local servants may be hired at modest fees to take over the cooking and other housekeeping chores, while beach boys serve as fishing guides or boat attendants. Should balmy breezes and sunshine pall, a short drive to the Jaragua offers urban diversions and contact with other vacationers far from home.

A word of warning should be heeded by all bathers at Boca Chica and on other Dominican beaches. Tropic sunrays are deceptive and dangerous, particularly for blond Anglo-Saxons with delicate skins. No matter how accustomed to sunbaths at home, American visitors will do well to guard against excessive exposure under Caribbean skies. Near the Equator, ultraviolet rays can be lethal in their cumulative impact, hence even

Creoles and Negroes wear broad-brimmed sisal hats. Incidentally, sunbaths in the tropics seldom produce a satisfactory tan. They devitalize before imparting that desirable caramel pigment to Nordic complexions.

CHAPTER 21

SWITZERLAND IN THE TROPICS

Jarabacoa

FOR this trip to the heights of the Cordillera Central at least two days should be allowed, though with completion of the luxurious new Hotel de la Montaña, on the outskirts of Jarabacoa, most visitors will be tempted to linger for the balance of their Dominican holiday. Since there is a considerable climb, with corresponding changes in temperature, warm wraps are advisable, as well as stout walking shoes for hiking addicts. Actually the Jarabacoa summers fluctuate between 55 and 65 degrees—temperatures so cool that wheat, apples, quince, barley, pears, strawberries, and cherries are grown on surrounding haciendas.

The journey from Ciudad Trujillo requires about three and a half hours by automobile, with the last fifteen miles negotiated at a slow pace over a serpentine mountain route. Following the already familiar Duarte Highway as far as La Vega, the Jarabacoa road branches off sharply to the left and then seems to backtrack southward in a steady ascent. From palm fronds, fiery *flamboyán,* and delicate mimosa blossoms the scenery now changes to long-needle pines, with sudden vistas—over a precipice—of the Jimenoa River and the beginnings of the great Yaque del Norte, one of the Republic's master streams. Its twin, the Yaque del Sur, springs from the lofty watershed of La Rucilla on Pico del Yaque, where both rivers start in separate directions, one running northwestward to Monte Cristi while the other drains into the southern Bay of

Neiba at Barahoma. The Yaque del Norte weds Atlantic waters, whereas its sister stream is strictly a Caribbean river.

On the plateau of Jarabacoa, jutting out over the valley, the handsome Hotel de la Montaña spreads its ample architectural wings. This lavish vacationer's paradise is built in ranch style, the lower floors constructed in concrete and the upper portion in fine native woods. Its situation is 2,750 feet above sea level, in a landscape of pine forest and natural rock springs. From its terraces, looking westward, may be seen the frosty peak of 10,319-foot Mount Trujillo, the highest point in the Antilles.

According to General Leslie J. Kincaid, manager of the American Hotels Corporation, 570 Lexington Avenue, New York, the Dominican Republic's string of resort hotels—those already built and those still in project—will have no peers in Latin America. At the La Montaña the first radiant-heated dancing pavilion to be built in a tropic country is already under construction, providing warmth at chilly altitudes; the pavilion has a tiled floor laid over convoluted steam pipes. Heat is supplied by a modern hydroelectric plant at nearby Jimenoa Falls. Surrounding the hotel all manner of sports facilities invite attention: tennis, swimming, horseback riding, hunting, and fishing.

The town of Jarabacoa, a short distance away, offers quaint streets and native quarters, as well as the impressive summer homes of the country's élite. Most of the latter estates are surrounded by beautifully landscaped gardens, and the all-over picture is vividly reminiscent of an Alpine resort.

Several modest and old-fashioned hostelries in the town make a bid for the tourist trade and, though cheap, they are clean and acceptable. Among these is the Hotel Marina, situated on the main street, Avenida Presidente, at the corner of Calle Mella, and owned by Doña Marina Martínez. This lady does her own cooking, which is excellent, and she serves three meals a day, included in the price of a room—three dollars. To

be sure, her bathrooms bear not the remotest resemblance to those at La Montaña, nor is her dancefloor heated, though it is located smack in the center of her downstairs bar and the "hot" goings-on of a Saturday night whip up sufficient steam.

Other hotels of the Marina category are the Gran Hotel Imperial, the Nacional, the Presidente, and the Yaque. Here, let the reader be advised, are no Ritz Carltons.

Nightlife in Jarabacoa is currently enlivened by the presence, at nearby Jimenoa Falls, of a large workers' encampment, busy on a major engineering project. The steep foaming cataract of the Jimenoa River is being harnessed as a source of electric power that will affect vast areas of the Republic. American experts have moved in with their crews of native helpers, all of whom come to town at dusk for a bit of revelry.

Shiny jukeboxes have invaded the sleepy taverns of Jarabacoa's main stem. These musical atrocities are called *belloneras,* a sobriquet derived not from the English "bellow" but from the Spanish *"bello,"* which means beautiful and doubtless refers to the garish lights that flare up each time a dime is fed into the slot.

To point up further the frontier atmosphere, there are florid ladies of the night leaning against bars in the best Mae West fashion, with jangling bracelets, henna locks of cocker-spaniel length, and kohl shadows under their eyes. This demimonde phase deserves mention because, actually, it is so little in evidence throughout Dominican cities. There is no organized prostitution flourishing as big business. In Ciudad Trujillo's outer fringe, beyond the airport, a few beer parlors have drab "hostesses" who would be companionable for a fee, though no pressure is brought to bear on the customer. That debonair traveler and authority on the Caribbean, W. Adolphe Roberts, singles out the Dominican Republic as unique among Latin lands: during his sojourn there he never saw a streetwalker. This does not necessarily mean that they do not exist. But if they do, it must be conceded that these ladies operate with laudable discretion and good manners.

Jimenoa Falls

These scenic cataracts can be visited by car or on foot over a mountain road about a mile beyond Jarabacoa. Narrow paths lead from the highway to the edge of a precipice, where the roar of waters can be heard. According to legend a monk was drowned here after chiding a wealthy Spaniard for mistreating some slaves. Following this obvious act of revenge the Spaniard felt the monk's curse upon him. A short time later his young wife died of an unknown sickness. Frightened, the Spaniard took his baby son and mounted a charger, to escape the region forever. But as he passed the cliffs of Jimenoa the thunder of the falls startled the horse and caused it to tumble over the ledge, carrying its riders to their deaths. More than a century later natives of the highlands still claim to hear the neighing of the horse, the Spaniard's shriek, and the thin wail of a child echoing from the depths.

But visitors bent on checking this eerie phenomenon had better hurry, for soon the tumbling waters of the Jimenoa will be channeled through a system of tunnels, and the present cataracts are due to change into a mild trickle. Capacity of the Dominican Republic's major electric-utility firm, the Electric Company of Santo Domingo, will be boosted 35 per cent when the organization's Jimenoa hydroelectric plant goes into operation. Started in December of 1947 and scheduled to be completed in the same month two years later, the project is being financed directly by the company at a cost of one and a half million dollars.

The 7000-horsepower turbine is being constructed on the Jimenoa River in rough terrain. Power generated at the plant will be transmitted over the same line that now cuts almost directly across the Republic from Ciudad Trujillo on the southern coast to Puerto Plata in the north.

Company managers believe that the added power made available on this line will eventually attract new agricultural enterprises, and thus population, into the section between the

capital and the vast area around La Vega, which is virtually the heart of the island.

As designed by expert technicians, the Jimenoa waters are being harnessed by diverting the stream into a 4,300-foot-long tunnel cut through the base of a mountain about 800 feet high at the point corresponding to the middle of the tunnel. Six feet in diameter, this tunnel feeds a pipeline that leads down a steep 600-foot decline to the turbine.

The cost of this project will bring the company's investment program for the next three years to a total of three million dollars, or about half of the value of its present plant equipment. The company itself was organized in 1928 under franchise from the government. Ownership is entirely in private hands, and part of the stock is held by a utility group in the United States. The franchise terms stipulate that two and one half per cent of the gross revenue be paid to the government annually. At present, the company supplies electricity to Ciudad Trujillo and most of the other major cities.

As for the lovely Jimenoa Valley, its beauty will not be marred despite the onward march of technology. But the vanishing falls will be silenced, putting to rest the lost souls of the haunted Spaniard and his son.

Constanza

From Jimenoa Falls it is a good hour's drive across the spinal column of the sierras to the enchanting plateau of Constanza. The direction is almost due south, over a road that literally rides the ridge, affording a breathtaking view on both sides of the Cordillera Central. In the distance, to the west, Mount Trujillo can be seen on clear days jutting into the sky. Straight ahead, looking southward, rises Mount Cucuracho, its name strangely reminiscent of the Hungarian *kukoricza* and the Viennese *Kukuruz,* for corn on the cob or maize. Farther on is Mount Culo de Maco, an embarrassingly dubbed geological formation that impressed earliest observers with its resemblance to the sitting end of a monkey.

The lofty valley of Constanza is the nearest thing to a Swiss *Alm* or Alpine grazing meadow in the New World. Framed by stacked mountain ranges that pile up over one another against the Haitian horizon, this hidden garden spot is the island's top-quality fruit and vegetable bin. So superior are the berries, apples, peas, green beans, asparagus, and other products of the area that they command premium prices in the capital.

The town of Constanza is small, with the highway forming its main street while unpaved lanes cut across it in an irregular pattern. Many of the houses are log cabins built of solid mountain pine, reddish in hue. There are few stone or stucco structures.

The hotel situation is inadequate at present, hence a return to Jarabacoa remains advisable. Nevertheless, in case of emergency, there is a local hostelry that offers clean beds and, of course, good food.

Not far from Constanza there is a gushing brook that widens into a pool where village children romp, and farther in the mountains may be seen a private summer estate belonging to President Trujillo. But what appears most noteworthy about this entire district is the fact that the population has remained almost pure Indian. Almond-shaped eyes, aquiline features, straight black hair, and high Mongol cheekbones all bear the stamp of Arawak, Taíno, and Carib strains.

Haitian blood has seeped through the mountain barriers, to be sure. There is also evidence of amiable sentiments on the part of some blue-eyed explorer or perhaps a Jimenoa engineer, for now and then a blond but kinky-haired child with hazel iris and ivory skin stops the visitor in his tracks.

Some of these mixed breeds are remarkably handsome and well formed, though their classification becomes confusing. Happily the island is free from racial intolerance *per se*. In Dominican territory both social acceptance and high office accrue to white, black, Indian, and Mestizo in equal degree.

Driving back down the mountain road to Jarabacoa and thence toward La Vega, preferably at sunset, the traveler is

confronted with another curious sight. To his left, silhouetted against the western sky—and only a few yards from the road—will be seen a pair of trees joined by an odd horizontal trunk to form a perfect letter H. This freak of nature has no significance whatever, but hired guides and chauffeurs make it their business to ascertain the initials of their tourist customers and, if coincidence warrants it, to stop for a moment of homage between the twin forest denizens. The phenomenon is singular in one respect: Visitors who pause for a look are not tempted to deface the bark with carved letterings. A kind of awe causes them to desist. Their initial, better than lifesize, is already on the spot. Perhaps God put it there?

CHAPTER 22

THE DOMINICAN SOUTHWEST

BARAHONA

IF THE island of Hispaniola were to be considered as a map of the world in miniature, Barahona Province would correspond in form to India. Its pointed shape, facing due south to Venezuela, ends at Cape Beata, which is dotted by several lagoons and cut off from the rock of Isla Beata by a channel of the same name. Farther inland there are other lakes and lagoons, yet despite this the peninsula of Barahona is an arid desert. Like its counterpart in Arizona and New Mexico, it owes whatever fertility has been wrung from the land to man's obstinate labor. For a large portion of the area was once sea bottom and much of the soil is salt.

Of the various journeys to be taken by the enterprising tourist this is unquestionably the hardest, though some of the strain can be avoided by taking a plane instead of motoring. Much can be seen from the air as a bright geologic chart unfolds itself at a quick glance, but its quickness leaves only a superficial impression. To gain some lasting knowledge of Barahona the visitor must stay on the ground and take experience firsthand. For an automobile or bus round trip, at least two days should be allowed. This will permit enough sightseeing to warrant the time, effort, and expense—the third of these, incidentally, being the smallest item.

Leaving Ciudad Trujillo after a seven-o'clock breakfast, with hot-weather clothing, a well-stocked lunch basket, and mosquito oil, the traveler has a choice of starting westward over the beach road to Jaina or along the hilly route via the

historic battlefield of La Toma. In either case the city of San Cristóbal is reached after a half hour's drive. Its sights include the old hacienda of the Trujillo family, fine public buildings, boulevards, parks, and playgrounds along the Nigua River, and on the western edge of town the enormous new campus of the National Agricultural College.

The highway, part of the Carretera Nacional that leads to Haiti, skirts the campus and affords a close view of faculty homes, some of them occupied by refugee professors from abroad. The road continues through the small village of Yaguate and across the Nizao River to Baní, where Dominican wit is said to be at home. Baní natives are cocksure, exuberant, and famed for sharp repartee. Their temperament seems to have left its mark on the surroundings, for Baní houses show the vivid color that prepares the eye for the adobe backgrounds of the approaching desert. These cottages and huts are of clapboard or stucco painted terra-cotta red with doors and shutters of cobalt blue, or vice versa. Also, the high-backed "armchair saddle" makes its appearance, confirming a Baní claim that if one goes anywhere at all one ought to go in comfort.

Again a series of villages and a river crossing, the Ocoa which runs dry part of the year, and then on the left hand a view of Ocoa Bay, rich in turtles. Only seven kilometers from the sea lies Ázua, capital of the province bearing the same name, and temporary home of Cortez, Alvarado, Ponce de León, and several of their comrades before fame lifted them to a niche in history. At Ázua, Cortez marked time as a law clerk while he dreamed of military conquests. But the town has no memento of his obscurity beyond a few trivial records in the Ayuntamiento or City Hall. It was in Mexico that he would live in palaces, consort with Aztec royalty, and weep under an immortal tree. He who left no imprint at Ázua covered the Empire of the Montezumas with his bloody spoor.

From here on the landscape grows less verdant, leafy growth giving way to cactus patterns of green-gray hue. Agave plants bloom, not once in a century as they do elsewhere, but seem-

ingly all the time. Their flower, shaped like a gigantic chrysanthemum, is flaming orange in color, but makes a thankless home decoration or corsage, due to its gumlike sap that baffles all dry-cleaning methods. At times it is wise to obey, as an adult, the first law laid down to a small child: "Look, but don't touch!" It is a perfect law to follow in strange places.

Fifteen kilometers beyond Ázua there is a fork where the paved highway heads north to San Juan, Las Matas, and the border citadel of Elías Piña. Students of Indian lore should make this side trip, at least as far as San Juan, where an ancient ball court—reminiscent of the Maya game arena at Chichén Itzá—may be inspected. A separate day must be allowed for such a detour. An excellent new hotel combines the ancient and modern names of the place: San Juan de la Maguana.

The Barahona road, now gravel highway, runs due west from the fork and climbs over steep serpentines through the Sierra de Neiba. Before long, from the heights, the waters of the great Río Yaque del Sur may be seen on the right as the road turns sharply south. On the left, in the distance and far below, appear the opal waters of Neiba Bay, with the turquoise-blue Caribbean marking the horizon. The earth grows bleak and dusty, with stretches of road still under construction, though none of it is impassable. As Bahoruco Province comes into view across the Yaque the characteristic vegetation of this region brings yet another sample to the observer's attention—the tall, spindly, wind-beaten *caruta* or South Seas palm, poor cousin to the glorious straight *palma regis* of the Cibao. Neither coconuts nor building materials, animal fodder, or valuable oils can be harvested from this enormously high yet warped swamp giant. It swings in a melancholy arc that bespeaks the lonely emptiness of its home ground, though withal an oasis in an arid land.

As the road nears Barahona there is another change of scene to be noted in successive villages that bear an unmistakable similarity to their prototype, the African kraal. Palmetto huts with round peaked roofs, mud floors, and flocks of little black children playing in the compound give evidence that here the

Haitian influx has left a deep mark. Complexions are darker than anywhere else in the Republic, and among the villagers there is an occasional trace of patois.

Now the mouth of the Yaque is crossed by a great bridge, and a short distance beyond, on the edge of Neiba Bay, the white houses of Barahona reflect the early afternoon sun. It is advisable, before entering the city proper, to take lodgings in a small Italian tourist home, directly before the monumental arch that leads to the main avenue. Here clean rooms and good food are obtainable; inside plumbing is welcoming, though the bathing facilities are not luxurious. As an alternate choice there are two or three so-called hotels in the center of town, not to be recommended with any degree of heartiness. Barahona is earmarked for one of the government's projected modern hostelries, to be sure, but no cornerstone has as yet been laid. For the present, only the easy-tempered and reasonable traveler, who can adjust himself to small discomforts in exchange for richly rewarding experience, should make Barahona his goal.

The rich rewards begin at once. In the center of the town is a large plaza with a band kiosk, where a municipal orchestra holds forth in the warm evenings with rhythmic *merengues* and other native music, interspersed with occasional Sousa marches and a joyous if off-key Vienna waltz. Round about, sitting on park benches, the townspeople listen or stroll in pairs, while small black children scamper over the flowerbeds at their games. Nearby is a workingman's movie house with garish posters along the sidewalk and a jangling bell bidding for customers. A block away the beautiful small Teatro Ercilia furnishes Barahona with its first touch of luxurious modernity. Here the best American pictures alternate with Spanish stock companies, French concert singers, and other artistic offerings.

From the plaza several streets radiate through native quarters down to the water front, where the breakers of Neiba Bay roll against a narrow strip of beach. A low stone wall just above the surf is a favorite trysting spot, where star-gazing youth

lingers till all hours. On clear nights the lights may be seen at the distant point of the harbor mouth where cargo ships slip out to sea. Sugar is carried in great quantities from the peninsula, for expert irrigation has turned portions of this arid zone into a cane empire. Coffee too has become an export product, in addition to the region's original resource—salt.

After inspection of the city proper a short excursion may be made to the nearby community of Cabral, literally "Place of Goats," as these sturdy little animals abound in the dry shrub that would not sustain other herds. In this region there are actually more goats than humans. Some zebu cattle from equally bare India have been imported and show signs of adapting themselves to Barahona soil where Holstein or Jersey milch cows would not thrive. A contrast is particularly apparent between the razorback undersized pigs of these desert lands and the great bloated mud-wallowing sows on a Cibao plantation. Barahona porkers have nothing to wallow in, as saline desert makes no mud.

At Cabral the southern Yaque bends in a sharp angle that is referred to as El Rincón (the Corner); within this river elbow lies the Laguna del Rincón, a large lake favored as a duck-hunting preserve. At the start of autumn flocks of wild ducks wing southward from Canada and the United States to this Caribbean refuge, unaware that their arrival here is eagerly awaited by local nimrods and less sporting commercial trappers who lay huge nets to gather in a wholesale catch. Efforts have been made to domesticate these migratory birds by clipping their wings and keeping them on Rincón Lake through the summer months. But, though they survive, they pine for the northern haunts and their small duck minds are not on propagation.

Laguna del Rincón is of course popular with fishermen, as is the Bay of Neiba off Barahona's wharves. Deep-sea fishing or the inland variety may be planned with local guides, who provide tackle and all other necessities at negligible cost.

Finally, Barahona Province and its capital lay claim to a

glittering sort of distinction as the birthplace of the film star María Montez whose real name, according to natives, is Africa María Gracia Vidal. During her first marriage, to an American, she was known as Mary McFeeters. Because of some idiosyncrasy of her parents, who named all their daughters after continents, Miss Montez' sisters are said to be dubbed Asia, Australia, and America.

CHAPTER 23

LAKE ENRIQUILLO

THIS trip, which theoretically should take no more than four hours by car, actually requires a full day due to an almost mandatory detour into the salt mines of Las Salinas, an inspection of the irrigated sugar plantations beyond Neiba, and various delays caused by travel over sheer wilderness where there is only the sketchiest road. Sandwiches and bottled drinks are advisable as no restaurants will be found en route. But of the entire panorama, rich and colorful, that is offered by the island called The Land Columbus Loved, the region of Lake Enriquillo is the most interesting, awe inspiring, and weird. To enter it is to walk on the floor of a vanished ocean that, in vanishing, left behind a vast opalescent body of brine known as the great salt lake of Enriquillo. The name is of course derived from the Taíno chieftain who defied the Spaniards and retired with his followers into the Bahoruco desert and the bare cliffs of the sierra.

Starting from Barahona no later than 8 A.M., the traveler will roll westward through Cabral and past Laguna del Rincón to a fork in the well-paved main highway, where a rough dust road—marked Las Salinas—leads off to the left into a series of rocky canyons. After some twenty minutes of unavoidable jouncing, the sheds and offices of the mining camp are approached. From here it is possible to proceed only on foot. A narrow goat path leads up the steep mountain side, affording an ever widening vista of the valley below. All about is dust and rock interspersed with strange cactus growths. The dust is clean and the rock is veined with patterns of chalk.

Halfway up the mountain (a climb of no more than fifteen

minutes) the top of a funicular loading elevator is reached, with a chain of cars bearing the mined salt to the small railroad at the base. From here a level path edges along the precipice and turns suddenly into the mine proper, a cathedral of natural crystal. Soaring skyward on three sides are walls of saltstone tapering like Gothic spires, while nearby the tattoo of hammers beats a rhythmic accompaniment as laborers break up the rock into pebble-size bits. Often the geometric structure of the crystals is so nearly perfect that clear cubes are carried off to Barahona bars and served by pranksters in supposedly iced drinks. This is a practical joke one had better be prepared for.

The descent from the mine is quick and the return to the paved highway is appreciated after this strenuous interruption. Now the trip proceeds into the unreal land that is not yet freed of its marine memories. The ground underfoot is white coral, thickly intermingled with seashells and crustacean fragments, while the scenery presents suddenly an aspect of grotesquerie. Normal cactus forms take on tortuous shapes, growing into veritable trees yet dying at their trunks in the process of transformation. These weird plant apparitions form tangled forests of thorny wood, known in Africa as euphobia trees, through which only hardy wild goats would venture. The sight of desiccated and withered branches ending in prickly pears of sahuaro green is like something out of a nightmare. Nowhere in nature does the struggle between life and death seem to be symbolized more starkly. The euphobia, not surprisingly, secretes a mortal poison with which Indian warriors treated the tips of their arrows. Because of its efficacy the pursuing Spaniards did not harass Bahoruco tribes with any degree of relish. This contributes to the fact that the entire peninsula of Barahona became the white man's last area of penetration and is still barely past the frontier stage.

Continuing through the ghost forest the road runs smoothly toward Duvergé, a desert town with brown sunbaked houses and a church built of sand-colored slats that look like perfectly

matched reeds. Here bright-eyed children swarm about the filling station (the last gasoline depot before the distant Haitian border) and eagerly point out their school building nearby. The town is bare, neat, and strongly African in aspect, while its French name betokens its proximity to another culture.

Beyond Duvergé the great salt flats of Lake Enriquillo sprawl to right and left of the highway, indicating the stages by which the huge inland sea is evaporating and shrinking to ever smaller size. Tiny kraal villages lie still and lonely in this emptiness, beyond shrub or tree. One final spot of human habitation, primitive, desolate, hovers on uncertain swamp soil, and then the white horizon begins to shimmer with a streak of opal that widens, palpitates, and swells into prism colors: Lake Enriquillo.

The road lies like a ribbon on an endless beach, fringed by distant mountain ranges, reminiscent of the Great Salt Lake wastes of Utah. But here are flamingo-breeding grounds from which Florida's Hialeah Park replenishes its flocks. And beyond the white surf of Lake Enriquillo can be seen the bobbing heads of giant crocodiles that circle the long Isla de Cabritos (Goat Island) where Taíno warriors rested from battle.

Gradually the gem-colored horizon draws nearer as the firm highway seems to blend into dry lake bottom from which the waters have receded. Travelers are tempted, at this point, to swerve from the road and drive across the flats—as one would on the hard Arizona desert or the Utah wastes—to the fringe of aquamarine breakers. But this is dangerous. The lake's shrinkage being an imperceptible but constant process, there are treacherous quicksands all along that vast and inviting beach. Perfectly safe on foot, it is not to be crossed by vehicles except at the risk of seeing them sink in a matter of hours. Also, from now on there is no sign of human habitation or sound of passer-by to rescue a heedless fool. Anyone reckless enough to nose his car into the silt trap may spend several days flag-

ging an empty sky for help and finally drop of thirst in that Dali landscape.

But danger can be skirted by remaining on the excellent banked road that soon runs within a mere forty yards of the water. Pausing for a stroll, one may approach the pink flamingoes that stalk gracefully along the beach, or even attempt a salt-water dip. The latter depends entirely on how one feels about crocodiles.

It is possible to make a complete circuit of Lake Enriquillo, but only the southern length of shore offers a flawless highway. To skirt the western tip and return by the northern route it is necessary to knock along over parched brush areas, donkey paths, and a rudimentary highway that is picked up at La Descubierta where juncture is made with the great Carretera Internacional. Here one road runs up along the Haitian border and climbs over breathtaking mountain ranges to the Artibonito River, the frontier towns of Villa Anacaona, Loma de Cabrera, and Dajabón, with the Atlantic harbor of Monte Cristi as its final goal. Eastward from La Descubierta the highway winds through primitive kraal villages clinging to slopes of the Sierra de Neiba. From here narrow mountain paths lead into a canyon to the fantastic cave of Las Caritas (the Little Faces) high up on a wall of rock. In this grotto, the subterranean continuation of which has not yet been explored, there are stone images and carvings of prehistoric times. The height and present difficult accessibility of the cave entrance indicate that its use for human habitation coincided with the period when the whole peninsula of Barahona had not yet risen from the sea. To climb the cave shelf and look back is to envision antiquity, when turquoise Caribbean waters might here be lapping at one's feet.

The dusty lakeside road continues on to the town of Neiba and thence into the immense stretches of cane fields that make up the Ingenio Barahona sugar plantations. The landscape now becomes an endless pattern of geometric squares, each crisscrossed by irrigation channels, the entire panorama swim

ming in a restful green. The early afternoon sun is hot and merciless. Here and there field workers of the deepest Haitian black splash in the ditches and, minus a stitch of clothing, still dripping, pick up long machete blades to resume their tasks. Many of them six feet tall, uninhibited, flaunting their animal vitality, lend a touch of aboriginal drama to the scene.

The drive through the sugar empire is long. It leads through workers' thatched compounds, past overseers' shaded homes, along stretches of railroad tracks with loaded platform cars that are short and equipped with side grilles reminiscent of the hemp transport cars of Yucatán.

From the sugar fields a wide and well-kept road returns toward Barahona, running along the northern shore of Laguna del Rincón and affording another perspective of this duck hunter's paradise. Anglers linger at the lagoon, while deep-sea fishermen prefer the waters of Neiba Bay.

Just before the bridge over the Yaque River the main highway is reached, either to head back to Barahona or north and eastward on the return trip to Ciudad Trujillo.

CHAPTER 24

JIMANÍ

FOR those who have visited the fruitful Cibao, Samaná Bay, the eastern provinces of Altagracia and Macorís, as well as the capital and its environs, it is of equal importance to round out their picture of the Dominican Republic by viewing the western borderline of Haiti. An excellent opportunity is offered on the Lake Enriquillo trip as, only seven kilometers beyond the inland sea, which is today more than 100 feet below ocean level, the new-born town of Jimaní ries about the slopes of the border hills.

Everything at Jimaní bespeaks the future, as this outpost of Dominican civilization has no past. Paved streets and sidewalks gleam white in the sun amid white homes, white schools, white stucco government buildings. A fortress marks the western limits, with picked troops garrisoned on year-round duty. Three kilometers beyond the barracks and the last sentry post lies a no man's land with a stone marker at its center. To walk here one must have special permission or be accompanied by one of the garrison troopers, since borders everywhere invite immigrant smuggling and other illegal activities.

Just a short distance over the Haitian line, but hidden here by the rising hills, lies Lake Étang Saumâtre, formerly one with Enriquillo. A fine view of it may be obtained by driving from Jimaní to Boca Cachon, Tierra Nueva, and Las Lajas. But again a word of warning: Tierra Nueva means New Land, namely former lake bottom, over which only the first hint of human traffic has designed a donkey track. To speak of a road is to indulge in euphemism.

Significantly, at Jimaní the great Bahoruco Sierra closes the

salt world of the inner sea, and there is an end to coral. The mountain slopes are verdant, rich enough with loam to carry forest growths that fit a normal landscape. But climbing the first ledges of these border hills and looking back, the visitor finds himself as though in a waking dream, which he has not yet shaken off. For the entire Enriquillo basin with its marine fossils and prehistoric skeletal matter, undergoing slow but inexorable change as a transient Fata Morgana, captures the imagination with all the impact of that which is ghostly and unreal.

To recover from the sensation of having seen oneself move beneath the flooring of a glass-bottomed boat it is good to know that on the main plaza of Jimaní there are a bar, a coffee parlor, and a soft-drink stand. Nothing can bridge the gap between fantasy and realism like the ubiquitous bottle of chilled Coca-Cola.

On the return drive, as the silence of the lake and of the vast salt desert gradually fades into the past, one's ears seem to become acutely sensitive to the slightest sound. The lowing of scrub cattle, the cry of a lost donkey, or the bleating of the Barahona goats are welcomed almost with relief. Thankfully the traveler listens to other voices: the chatter of *macacos* (monkeys) in the jungle thickets, and the rasping cackle of brightly plumed parrots and parrakeets that swarm overhead wherever a few stray palms loom into view. Parrots are prized in the tropics, not only for their gaiety and decorative appearance, but because their presence in house or garden discourages insect pests and rodents. The much-heralded incidence of psittacosis (parrot fever) seems almost apocryphal in countries that are the bird's natural habitat. West Indian and South American families generally consider this jolly pet as normal and acceptable a household companion as a cat or a dog.

The People

CHAPTER 25

THE TRIPLE HERITAGE

COMBINING as they do the divergent qualities of three different ethnological groups whose roots spring from as many separate continents, the Dominican people rightfully display a many-faceted character. Their inheritance is complex, rich, contradictory, a blend of not merely the modern and the old, but also of the prehistoric. Here lies their special claim to distinction. Most Latin American countries combine two leading civilizations—the Indian and the Spanish, as in Mexico or Peru; the African and the Portuguese, as in Brazil. But on the island of Hispaniola the tapestry is woven with more than two threads. From their Arawak-Taíno background Dominicans derive bravery and endurance, besides a distinctive form of plastic art. Their Spanish ancestry bequeathed them Europe's culture, ethics, and religion, while Africa's contribution includes great vigor, zest for living, originality of artistic concepts, and a superlative gift for rhythm. Finally, as a superstructure, there is the palpable influence of American progress upon modern Dominican life, combining and modifying these diverse currents into a harmonious whole. It is a process not yet, and perhaps never to be, completed. But the progressive stages of this growth guarantee something far better: continued movement and evolution, rather than inertia. Dominicans, contrary to other tropic peoples, do not love idleness. Though they have achieved a fine balance between fiestas and siestas, their pulse is fast rather than slow, their tempo keyed not to the past but to the future. This island is no place for a somnolent lama of Tibet; it will

forever remain Ponce de León's springboard in the search for the Fountain of Youth.

The Arawak-Taíno Traits

According to Fray Bartolomé de las Casas, the native Indians who inhabited Quisqueya or Haiti before 1492 observed tribal practices of rigid pattern. The social code demanded monogamy for gentry and peasant classes, with polygamy reserved for the ruling few. Kings or chieftains had up to thirty wives, purportedly to assure the continuity of leadership.

Inevitably the system of concubinage permitted favoritism in the royal household, with a number-one wife gaining ascendancy over her connubial colleagues. But she paid dearly for this questionable distinction. When a chieftain died, his favorite consort had the choice of killing herself or being buried alive in her master's grave. Only thus could his worth as lover, husband, and king be duly honored.

The island women were, physiologically, almost a race apart. Their health appears to have been unmatched anywhere in the world, for they knew no birth pains. During parturition, according to Spanish records, these lithe, doe-eyed creatures scarcely changed expression (*"no hacían gesto casi, ni torcían el rostro"*) nor did they make the slightest outcry. A new mother, having just thrust forth her child, rose to wash it in the river, then let it drink at her breast. This done, she bathed herself and went back to whatever chore had been interrupted by the routine event.

In a land of many and wondrous rivers, water played an important role in the maintenance of health. Baths were a daily practice, with whole communities, men, women, and children splashing together in the nude. The concept of immodesty was unknown, since these people lived close to nature and only that which was unnatural seemed evil to them. Few illnesses beyond the normal decrepitude of old age appeared to harass them. A passing rheum, a fever, or an ache could be cured with cold-water compresses, while for senility there was only

one radical remedy: to have none of it. That is, as in most primitive societies, there was no place for the old. They were killed swiftly and relieved of their misery, since one bereft of muscle, sight, teeth, and sexual vigor had assuredly nothing left to live for. According to Herodotus, the ancient Babylonians combined foresight with what to them was humanitarian mercy killing: at the first sign of illness, even in the middle-aged, they reached for the knife and made a clean end. Life was hard in antiquity, with frequent famines. A body not yet spoiled by the ravages of prolonged disease was edible and of eminent service to surviving kin. In the dark of prehistory, cannibalism was not a gruesome vice but an accepted necessity. Among economically bereft societies of our day, such as the Navajo tribes of Arizona, Colorado, and New Mexico, old age must still be dealt with ruthlessly; a white-haired grandsire or arthritic crone is led gently to a desert ledge, with water, a blanket, and a loaf of maize bread for a day's need, after which feebleness and the cold night air bring swift release.

As for dietary habits, the Arawaks and Taínos, as well as their Carib and Maya invaders, indulged in few frills. They ate animals whole, innards and all, roasting the hide off on a spit. Modern man's gustatory niceties did not evolve until the arrival of science and the study of anatomy clarified the function of internal organs and, indeed, identified them.

As to their religious life, the Indians were pantheistic and their gods represented the forces of nature. The sun and moon were deities that ruled light and shadow, summer and winter. Other hidden forces governing rain, drought, plague, and hurricane were given vivid form in carved stone images. But all statuary of early Quisqueya origin is miniature in size, and there is no trace of religious architecture. From this it may be conjectured that Arawaks and Taínos led a nomadic life, which at no time attained urban level. Their idols were small, a few of them a foot in size, but the overwhelming majority no bigger than the palm of one's hand. Household gods, in other

words, vest-pocket edition, that could be transported on short notice whenever the tribe had a mind to move. Additional conviction is lent this theory by the infinite quantity of statuettes found throughout the island, indicating that every man, woman, and child must have owned one. No pyramids or temples exist, even in rudimentary form. Worship took place in natural caves and by the fireside, where each family set up its gods.

Some deities did not find representation, for they were secondary in rank and thought to be engendered by the souls of the departed. In short, they were night ghosts called *hupias,* who frightened people in the dark and robbed them. Often they kidnaped small children. Understandably, no sculptor wasted his talent carving the face of an unseen *hupia* in stone, since no one would have wanted it around. Only through legend and word of mouth has knowledge of the existence of this phantom species been handed down to posterity. With the advent of Christianity the fear of *hupia* demons has been dispelled in all but the most primitive and remote mountain areas. They still exist, to be sure, in every country on earth. But modern man has found new names for them. To psychoanalysts they are guilt complexes, split identities, suppressed impulses, and twisted libido, while in police dockets they take flesh and blood form as night prowlers, robbers, and cutthroats against whom defenseless burghers bolt their doors.

The Spanish Traits

In ancient times, when Spain was only an outpost of the Roman Empire, and known as Iberia, its inhabitants were described by the historians Pompey and Justinian as a benighted people that knew nothing of wine making but drank instead a vulgar concoction called *celia,* which is beer. By 1492 and the Discovery, however, Spain's tastes had undergone considerable change. Her mode of life was touched by chivalry, romanticism, and the panoply of empire. Also, the once pagan Iberians were pledged passionately to the Catholic Church.

This carried an indelible mark to all the countries, no matter how distinct, that Spain conquered.

The Conquistadores came to the New World as do all immigrants and explorers, whether Pilgrim Fathers, cavaliers, or peasants, to find a better place to live. The fact that other human beings already lived upon the soil they chose to land on did not deter the invaders, who were prepared to do battle and stake out for themselves whatever they could seize by force. But this was not true of those first barefoot Franciscan and Dominican monks who followed in the wake of conquest; theirs was no search for land or treasure, but only the mission to which they had bound themselves by sacred oath—to go abroad among the heathen and tell the story of the Christ. This they did so well that over all of Latin America the pattern of Spanish and Portuguese ecclesiastic architecture bears witness to that story in eloquent ceramic tiles, woodcarving, goldleaf, bronze, and stone. But it survives also in the spirit of the native races that became metamorphosed by the admixture of European blood.

The Indian of the Americas, called by the French *"la race cuivrée"* ("the copper-colored race") took well to the blending, so long as the white man's greed did not lead to abuse and enslavement. The pensive, pastoral Taíno character formed an ideal foil for highstrung, volatile Spaniards with their European gambler's instinct and their European nerves. And the Indian took to Christianity, especially as embodied in the Church of Rome, with a ready and absolute fervor.

It was a church well versed in worldly needs. Despite its theory of sanctity by self-denial, Catholicism knew where adaptability was called for, and when. Observing that the enslaved Indians were dying in droves from overwork, the monks wrote bitter protests back to Spain. "No man should labor more than nine months of the year," said Fray Pedro de Salamanca to King Ferdinand, "or more than five hours every day. Otherwise how is the Church to teach religion, if everyone is too tired to give ear?" He spoke strongly on other matters, par-

ticularly the exploitation of the land. *"Questo maldito cavar en vez de plantar!"* ("This damned digging without planting!") rebuked the angry friar, for he saw in truth that the land was everywhere robbed of fruit and treasure yet not restored by fertilizer and other care to its productive state. It was a policy that would fast bankrupt Spain's colonial power.

But the Conquista brought also European customs, art, law, and literature to primitive Quisqueya, and from this blossomed forth the special culture that Dominicans today fall heirs to. Superimposed upon an almost forgotten Indian base, the speech, manners, traditions, and precepts of Spain have translated themselves into the daily living of these island peoples. Nowhere in the West Indies is there a nation more fiercely proud and stubbornly adhering to its Spanish heritage than Santo Domingo. Nursery songs, folklore, educational methods, the social code and etiquette, all have their root in the distant motherland from which most of the Republic's white citizens, 14 per cent of the total, can trace their origin. Yet withal there is no racial intolerance shown that part of the population, particularly rural, which is fully or partially of Negro descent. For here is but another phase of the Dominican portrait.

The African Traits

As in the United States, captives from Africa were brought against their will across the Atlantic to do the white man's labor. The sections of America to which they were carried had intolerably torrid summers, which Europeans, spoiled by a white man's climate at home, found too hard to bear. This was no less true of Dixie than of Jamaica, hence the need for helpers who were used to a sizzling sun.

Africa had a storehouse of unused manpower, certain to be immune to heat stroke. The slaves took well to the new soil into which fate transplanted them, but, like the Indians before them, they wilted under inhuman treatment. Fray Bartolomé de las Casas and his fearless friars fought for these too, Christianizing them while they were about it, and impressing upon

the King of Spain that black men's souls were no less immortal than his own.

The African slaves survived mistreatment far better than the antique Indians, upon whom lay the fatigue of uncounted centuries. And it is Negro vigor, resourcefulness, and exuberance that has furnished the Dominican Republic with much of its color and regional savor. Native crafts, such as basket weaving, woodcarving, pottery, coral and tortoise-shell sculpture, and painting, all derive from African rather than Spanish or Taíno sources. Similarly, dance rhythms and native songs ring out to percussion accompaniments that have their counterpart in remote African jungles. But most of all the Negro influence left its imprint upon folkways and superstitions in rustic areas and city slums. Here, though forbidden by the authorities, traces of voodoo impinge upon the daily existence of people rich in imaginative power if not cash. Love affairs, illness, or dreams of glory or revenge are secretly solved by potions, charms, and incantations, which are cheaper and more fun than aspirin.

Indian dignity and patience, Spanish intelligence, verve, and sophistication, plus the warm pulsings and naturalism of Negro admixtures—these make up the manifold shadings of Dominican character today. They give a clue to the island's extraordinarily varied development in both commercial and cultural aspects.

Only with these component factors in mind can the stranger grasp the deeper meanings behind seemingly odd customs, conflicting beliefs, contradictory traditions. To know a country well it is not enough to review neat accounts of its geography and history. An understanding of simple daily incidents, street scenes, popular slang, humor, menus, music—this is the magic key.

CHAPTER 26

DOMINICANS AT WORK AND PLAY

OUTSTANDING among tropic peoples, today's citizens of the Dominican Republic are zestful rather than languid, dynamic rather than drugged by leisure in the sun. Theirs is a climate that favors moods of prolonged idleness, but they are not idle. Work, and the fruits of work, have convinced them that a nation's health depends on intelligent effort in behalf of social and economic betterment. Wherever the tourist or visiting businessman turns during even the most cursory inspection of this island realm he will find improvements in project or approaching completion. The whole country is in a state of flux, full of optimism, looking forward to a tomorrow of still greater potentialities.

It will be argued that progress is attained at the cost of picturesqueness, a price too high for a Caribbean country—set in the very heart of one of the world's choice vacation zones—to pay. But the Dominican Republic has no fear in this respect. For glamour and dramatic beauty its scenery alone is unsurpassed in the West Indies, while the composite elements that make up its population suffice to stamp the country with an originality all its own. True, there is no "national costume" such as Holland, Greece, or Yugoslavia can boast. No attempt is made, Hollywood fashion, to mislead gullible tourists by the invention of some absurd fancy dress. Yet the Dominican countryside is alive with a native style and color that can belong nowhere else but in the Caribbean. Only on ancient Haiti and Quisqueya are peaked turbans wound to more fantastic heights than ever in the Orient, and with bolder splashes

of color. Likewise the weaving of native hats, endless in variety of design, has here become a fine art. Headgear throughout the West Indies is florid, uninhibited, generous of size, and fearless in form. Carefully pleated palm fibers shaped into scrolls, cartwheels, or turrets of bright hues make their wearers look like characters out of a Katharine Dunham dance work. This is intrinsic to the rural backlands of Santo Domingo, just as the round rancher's hat of finest Panama weave becomes the standard for plantation owners, overseers, and cattlemen of the Cibao. Everywhere in the Caribbean the nature of people's occupations can be fairly guessed by their top décor; their way of life goes to their heads.

By this same token, city people do not walk about in theatrical attire. Businessmen in Ciudad Trujillo transact their affairs in streamlined modern buildings at a crisp and efficient tempo. They dress like their counterparts in Washington, New York, London. Or rather, as these counterparts would dress in unbroken sunny weather. Similarly, though Dominican country women offer constant inspiration to the painter bent on capturing authentic "types," their urban sisters scorn quaint regional touches that look so well on illustrated travel circulars. Schoolgirls in Ciudad Trujillo resemble bobby-soxers of Los Angeles, while affluent society matrons match anything in the pages of *Harper's Bazaar* or *Vogue*. Hair-dos, American or Parisian, follow international styles, and there has been an over-all invasion of the home-permanent-wave kit. In the Antilles, as everywhere else, newspaper advertisements ask the pressing question: "Which Twin Wears the Toni?"

In the matter of feminine attire, Dominicans have successfully resisted mass production of factory goods. Except for house dresses and working apparel, women in Latin countries everywhere prefer patronizing their personal dressmakers rather than a ready-to-wear merchant. There is no department store, in the proper definition, to be found at Ciudad Trujillo, though large textile houses do a flourishing business in yard goods. Similarly, Dominican men buy haberdashery from spe-

cialty shops, but even a taxi driver has his favorite tailor. Cloth is imported largely from England and the United States, and the best tailors on the island are British. Experienced tourists and visiting businessmen have found it highly advantageous to order half a dozen custom-made suits during a fortnight of lolling in the sun. The work is excellent in quality and far below costs at home.

The Dominican shoe industry has also made its mark, though feminine footwear is not yet up to the best standards abroad. The finest work is done in men's town and sport shoes, particularly jodhpurs and riding boots. A special line of straw and fiber sandals for summer wear or beach is highly satisfactory to women vacationers, often available with bags and hats to match. But for regular street or evening purposes Dominican ladies depend on imports from the United States. This is true of all fashion-conscious countries in the world: the peculiar perfection of the American shoe last, as far as women are concerned, has never been equaled anywhere.

But once dressed and happily shod, what do Dominicans do to fill their days, particularly after working hours?

To begin with, the country runs on New York time, though in hot weather all business houses open at eight A.M. Members of the President's Cabinet often work from seven thirty to one, knocking off in the early afternoon but returning at four or five. Short siestas are a nationwide custom, but they do not entail a general paralysis of public affairs. Dominicans are an active, not a static people.

Education has been keyed to this fundamental trait. Formerly patterned after Europe's institutions, schools have more recently adopted the best features of the American system as well. Throughout the Dominican Republic, even in seemingly desolate villages, a government-supported schoolhouse is available to the young. In larger cities fine construction marks the halls of learning, while remote communities may boast only a one-room cabin presided over by a single teacher. But the

available education is as nearly the same as circumstances and the pupil's capacity for absorption will permit.

School attendance is compulsory for all children between the ages of seven and fourteen, and actual compliance with this law is reported as from 85 to 90 per cent of enrollment. The mayors of towns throughout the country are held responsible by the Department of Education for regular attendance and they, in turn, put the responsibility on the parents to see that their children do go to school regularly. In addition, a friendly vigilante system operates through individual teachers, particularly in rural areas. These public servants visit homes, count heads, and generally become acquainted with the varied backgrounds of their charges, thus establishing confidential relations with families that sometimes harbor suspicion and fear of bookish learning. Thus when parents hold their children back from school or the latter play hooky on their own it is the teacher's job to fetch them, after hours, for a sound talking-to. If this brings no results an appeal is made to the police.

English is a "must" in the fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth grades of primary schools and in the four years of high school. The curricula include practice as well as cultural instruction in this tongue. Rural schools concentrate on lessons in farming, even in the lower grades. Urban centers stress industrial training, while girls have added classes in household science, including sewing.

Since 1935, illiteracy has been reduced 12.33 per cent in respect to the total population and 18.09 per cent with relation to all natives over nine years old. Today illiteracy is estimated as less than 37 per cent of the total population of two million persons, and most of it occurs among old people.

High schools provide training for teachers and also help prepare students for advanced professional studies. Some five thousand teachers, selected on merit from the high schools and given the benefit of a pension system, handle the educa-

tional needs of isolated mountain areas. Salaries in country schools are from forty to forty-five dollars per month, and for city teachers from seventy-five to ninety dollars per month.

The University of Santo Domingo, headed by the distinguished Doctor Vega Batlle, has been greatly expanded, with a corresponding advancement of academic standards. It exchanges professors and scholarships with foreign universities, and prides itself on meeting the highest requirements. The new campus known as "University City," on the outskirts of the capital, is nearing completion. Its impressive buildings represent an outlay of two million dollars.

Santo Domingo University receives financial support from the government, but its expenses are also met by tuition fees of students. There are five faculties—law, medicine, mathematics, dental surgery, and pharmaceutical science. During the past summer, courses on Latin American culture were offered.

A new agricultural college at the provincial city of San Cristóbal is in the last stages of completion and will be opened under the directorship of Doctor Carlos Chardon, head of the National Institute of Agriculture. Here the poorest farmboy may bid for admission on merit alone, if he lacks patronage or other means of acquiring an advanced education. In short, it is the government's design to do away with so-called underprivileged citizens by opening to them every possible avenue for self-betterment, not by handouts but through individual effort.

Many wealthy families, to be sure, do not send their children to public institutions. Until recently the aristocratic European custom of hiring private tutors and governesses was followed in most Spanish-speaking countries, though the custom has declined, doubtless due to the universal high cost of living.

There are good private schools throughout the larger cities, most of them run by nuns or friars of the Catholic Church. These groups have their separate institutions, including churches and Sunday schools. At Ciudad Trujillo on Ave-

nida Bolívar the Dominican Sisters, arrived from Canada and the United States only within recent years, conduct the island's most fashionable girls' school. The young nuns, most of them very pretty, at times drive a station wagon into town where passers-by look upon them admiringly. Their pink complexions and Nordic blue eyes cause them to be called Los Angeles (the angels).

Near the triangle formed by Alfonseca, Bolívar, and Mella Avenues the Canadian Fathers also conduct an institution of learning, while monks of other orders are similarly occupied in different areas of the city. Unlike Mexico, where monastic garb is not permitted on the streets, the Dominican Republic shows complete tolerance to all faiths and their customs or costumes. This lends a special picturesqueness to the scene, as the religious brethren in particular wear their Old World cloaks, cassocks, sandals, and round clerical hats. Many have beards and all shave a round spot at the back of their heads. The Franciscans with their brown habit and long white cord stand out like so many reincarnations of their founding saint.

Added to this, the Archbishop is often seen in public, for no one is a recluse in Santo Domingo. Wearing black, or purple, the high prelate emerges from his palace adjoining the Cathedral to greet the crowds and cast his blessing over them on public feast days.

In this matter of putting in an appearance, the President of the Republic goes the Archbishop one better. Not just on patriotic or ecclesiastic occasions but daily, unless detained by illness or special duties, the First Executive takes a stroll at dusk down Avenida George Washington, past the water-front gardens of the Jaragua Hotel, to the Obelisk or the Trujillo-Hull Memorial. On these promenades he is accompanied by high officials, foreign guests, or personal friends. But, like the young governor of Santiago, he is accessible to strangers and often engages them in conversation.

Most of the President's entourage, incidentally, speaks English, since for more than twenty years the teaching of this

language has been compulsory in both private and public schools. The same is largely true throughout Latin America, a compliment to Uncle Sam, which the latter has been all too slow in returning. In the United States the study of Spanish is still optional and in most cases not available prior to high school. As all linguists know, this is too late to acquire full command of a foreign tongue. Adolescence is a time of physiological and emotional changes, when the growing mind is too preoccupied with the mysteries of reaching maturity; capacity for intellectual concentration and absorption is at low ebb, and retention of alien vocabularies is nil. The time to learn new languages is from kindergarten upward, when self-consciousness has not yet developed and there is no resistance to the imitation of strange sounds. Small children love to copy others. They pick up foreign tongues in transit, as it were, strictly by ear and almost without need of books.

A language as simple and phonetically pure as Spanish is especially easy to acquire. Credit for this belongs to the Academy in Madrid, which has consistently weeded out archaic spelling, outmoded constructions, and other stylistic debris. Thus every syllable has its absolute and unequivocal value. In Academy Spanish, streamlined and up to date, it is impossible to mispronounce a word. Spanish school curricula include no lessons in spelling, since each word is written exactly as it is pronounced, and vice versa.

For this same reason even adults taking up this language will find it easier to master than any other Western tongue. To be sure, there is the oft-recurring question to plague the would-be student: "Which shall I learn, South American Spanish or Castilian?"

The answer is that with regard to vocabulary, syntax, and pronunciation, both are exactly the same except for the fact that in Castilian there is a lisp employed when using the consonants *c* and *z*, as in the words *nación* (nation) and *corazón* (heart). Latin Americans do not lisp.

There seems to be a general opinion that Castilian Spanish

is spoken all over Spain, though nothing could be farther from the truth. Actually only two provinces, Castilla la Vieja and Castilla la Nueva (Old and New Castile) lay claim to this very special form of Spanish. Other sections, such as the seacoast region of Granada and Andalucía, sound the *c* and *z* as do the French or the Italians, since the lisp is said to have originated at the court in Madrid, with a twelfth-century king who had a cleft palate. To cover up His Majesty's failing, the Queen and the aristocracy made a virtue of it and considerately lisped in turn. A similar absurdity occurred with English when the Hanoverian Georges changed "either" (pronounced "eether" in Shakespeare's day) to the Germanic "eyether," which stubborn Irish reject as "naytherrr."

If the Spanish of Granada and Andalucía differed from that of Madrid, the discrepancy in language was even greater in the north. To this day Catalunia and the Basque provinces along the Bay of Biscay speak a Celtic dialect all their own.

What matters to the student of Spanish, however, is that the Conquistadores who did the pioneer work of conquering and colonizing the Americas were not courtiers from Madrid. They were seafarers and navigators from the coastal towns, and they brought with them their kind of speech. Thus Latin America took no liberty with Spanish, willfully changing it to hybrid forms. The language brought to the New World was Andalucían, pure and simple.

Only after the colonization was well under way, with no more fighting or danger, did Castilian gentlemen arrive on luxurious caravels, with their elegant ladies, their retinue of frock-coated servants, their jewels, art treasures, and beautiful speech.

The colonists were overwhelmed. Eager to identify themselves with such noble company, many attempted to imitate the Castilian lisp. But it was too late. Andalucían Spanish had taken deep root. What was more, it had become enriched by a vast catalogue of Indian terms and could be considered, with French and English, one of the few truly international

tongues. To return to the stylized preciosity of Madrid would have been shortsighted, if not actually impossible. It entailed the same effort as might have been required if the United States, after three centuries of American speech, had wished to re-adopt—not British English, which differs in every county and corner of the Empire—but the special Oxonian brand. It is too late. It can no longer be done.

For die-hard purists there remains a happy way out. Since the rules of grammar are the same at Oxford and Omaha, enterprising individuals can experiment with accents according to their changing geography. Similarly, students of Spanish need only remember to lisp while in Madrid, and to discard the erstwhile royal impediment when cruising around Latin America.

One more point is to be noted with regard to Spanish diction in the West Indies. Since Pidgin English, French patois, and various African dialects from the Congo and the Cameroons met and collided in the Caribbean, it is inevitable for the Spanish of Columbus to have acquired more than a nuance of melting-pot flavors. The Haitian invasions in particular wrought havoc with the clean consonants of Hispaniola and led to the dropping of final syllables. The same is true of Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Lesser Antilles, where the omission of every final *s* (in the spoken language only) leads strangers to suppose that Caribbean Spanish has no plural.

There is no remedy for this. Again the purist must compromise and in Rome do as the Romans do. It might help to pretend (to yourself, of course) that you are French, and that you wouldn't dream of using final consonants. But this is habit forming.

A helpful practice while visiting a foreign land is to scan local newspapers daily, if only to decipher the headlines by guesswork. There are bound to be people, places, and issues of international significance to be followed in hit-or-miss conjecture and with inevitable profit to one's vocabulary. It will be noted that in written or printed Spanish a question is

always anticipated by an inverted question mark before it. This is helpful to actors, orators, radio announcers, and all public speakers, since proper inflection can be prepared in advance. A footnote on courtesy: In Spanish conversation the emphasis is directed toward others, as "*te amo*" ("you I love") in place of "I love you." Furthermore, English is the only language in the world that puts the ego in a capital letter.

Lastly the tourist or business traveler who lacks all trace of linguistic talent need not despair. Latins are eagerly helpful. If they do not themselves command even a smattering of English, they are always experts at sign language. You can make up your own as you go.

Having thus assured himself that language need not be a hurdle on hospitable Dominican soil, the visitor will find it easy to enter into native diversions. Dominicans are sociable, musical, sports-loving extroverts. At the Jaragua Hotel strangers may join card parties or *chemin de fer* in the gaming room, dance on the terrace, or witness an afternoon meeting of the Ciudad Trujillo Women's Club at the tea hour in the main ballroom. Country-club life is active, and on Sundays the racetracks and sports arenas are crowded. Men, women, and children are rabid baseball fans. Other leisure-time interests among rich and poor include periodic theatrical engagements of stock companies from Argentina or Spain to alternate with rather routine movie fare. Finally, the National University and several local poetry societies furnish readings and lecture courses that are open to the public at a nominal fee. In short, Dominicans dislike boredom and they give themselves little chance to be bored.

CHAPTER 27

DOMINICAN WOMEN

IT IS always interesting to observe how the women of any country spend their time. From their status, both social and economic, a fairly accurate index of a nation's stability and happiness may be obtained.

By and large, Dominican women have an easy time of it. Except for life on an agricultural level, which, even with American refrigerators, milking machines, and other equipment is nowhere a rollicking picnic, the female sex enjoys in Latin countries an abiding immunity from drudgery. It is a matter of pride with Latin men not to tolerate servant chores in their life partners, even at the financial level of a modest postal clerk. The world over, few Latin women will be encountered, outside the servant class, who have ever touched dishpan or broom. The American housewife who, even with electrical devices of every sort, is chief bedmaker, shopper, cook, laundress, and scrubwoman, all rolled into one, has the heartfelt admiration and pity of her sisters in many foreign lands. Latin American tourists visiting the United States shudder with awe at Nordic endurance and capacity for self-punishment, particularly amid the feminine population. They return home quite sure that, given a choice between a vacuum cleaner and a parlor maid, they would take the parlor maid.

At first glance this would imply considerable misery and abuse heaped on the so-called exploited working classes, whether in the Dominican Republic or among its neighbors. But far from it. Even servants on the humblest level draw the line at what they will not do: the maid-of-all-work is a phenomenon unknown below the Rio Grande or the Florida Keys.

There is in Spanish no word to describe such a degraded creature. For, a Latin cook may condescend to wash the pots and pans if her employers are too impecunious to afford a scullery helper, but she will not double as chambermaid, waitress, or children's nurse. She doesn't need to. There are always enough applicants to go round, since no stigma is attached to domestic service on this self-respecting basis. Wages are reasonable enough to permit the hiring of several household helpers. A single domestic worker could readily command the salary of three, simply by taking on their combined jobs. But life would not be worth living in the role of a lone and joyless slavey. Occasional short-wave radio broadcasts from the United States reveal in their ecstatic commercials that a housewife in Duluth has just scrubbed her bathroom ceiling with Doozie Scouring Powder, or papered the walls of her living room singlehanded with rolls of satin-finished Quicko Sticko in five ravishing pastel shades, whereat Latin listeners of every social category gasp with shock. Is life in rich America so loveless that everyone must do everything for himself? Unquestionably the rest of the world bows in profound respect to Uncle Sam's industrial progress, his economic miracles, his scientific triumphs, his political power. But there is no envy for the lot of his women.

As in the southern republics generally, Dominican households are run in leisurely fashion. Wives have ample time for motherhood, hence there are large families to boost male pride. With everyone doing only a little work, women (including the servants) go to church in the mornings, or gossip on the plaza, in shops, and at the market place. As Latin women have learned to drive cars, they are often seen taking their children to school, though most middle-class families employ chauffeurs for this purpose.

Disposing of infinite leisure to be beautiful and well dressed, the average Dominican wife spends hours on her appearance. She likes to sew, but she would not think of putting her dressmaker out of work. In short, what takes up the afternoon?

Ladies' luncheons, card parties, teas, and other functions are the order of the day. But most of these are made to serve charitable purposes. There are innumerable worthy causes to support, such as the Christmas fiesta for poor children, the furnishing of old peoples' homes, hospitals for the destitute, schools for the deaf or the blind. In addition there is the Red Cross, and the growing participation of Dominican women in national affairs. Also, Latin countries are far ahead of their Anglo-Saxon neighbors in opening diplomatic careers to the gentler sex. It is part of the pedestal tradition, the gallant gesture.

For the rest, Dominican women have invaded the professions and the trades once exclusively reserved for men. The universities and colleges are open to both sexes, as are law courts, clinics, and laboratories to feminine lawyers, surgeons, and research scientists. In fact there is no field in which American business or professional women are not matched by their Latin sisters.

Much has been said, and rightly, about rapid aging processes in tropic climes. Maturity comes early to plant life and to human beings near the equatorial zone. This may be an added reason why Latin women are coddled and protected to the limit of their menfolks' economic capacity. French, Portuguese, Spanish, and Italian are called the Romance languages, which has a direct bearing on the culture of these countries. In the interest of romance, Latin women are enjoined to value charm above efficiency, and beauty before excessive toil.

CHAPTER 28

VIGNETTES OF DAILY LIFE

VISITORS to Caribbean vacation lands see invariably one side of a gaudily painted screen, set up for their special delectation. Its colors are compounded of all the trite ingredients requisite to so-called picturesqueness: ramshackle housing, peasants wearing flowers in their hair, contrived voodoo rituals, counterfeit costumes, and squalor with Hollywood trimmings.

The traveler looking for this sort of self-deception that is aided and abetted by tourist-bureau literature and guidebook propaganda will find himself disappointed on first stepping ashore in a Dominican harbor. For here is a land that has learned to hate exploitation, poverty, and filth, regardless of panoramic value. Few cities anywhere are as clean as Ciudad Trujillo. And no tropic island on earth puts less emphasis on staged glamour. In the Dominican Republic there are more denim overalls than sarongs, and more white shirts and neckties than garlanded leis. Here even market women prefer wearing hats rather than flowers in their hair, in token of their improved economic status.

The same urge toward betterment is apparent in urban and rural settings. While historic buildings and ruins are lovingly preserved by a special government commission, the emphasis in Dominican patterns of life is on the future, not the past. Quite steadily and surely the "picturesque" dilapidation of slum areas is giving way to paved streets, canalization, and cheerful, decent housing projects. And, surprisingly, more than enough of originality and native flavor remains, when the false values of down-at-the-heel "local color" have been swept

away. What survives the purging forces of this modern house cleaning may give off no exotic odors, but it is genuine rather than spurious, a breath of fresh air rather than a stench.

Within this framework that strives for modernization, economic redemption, and hygienic progress, Dominican life is still a rare and stimulating show. Its savor springs from the extraordinary endowments, both temperamentally and spiritually, of its people. Their qualities are as manifold and diverse as the rich strains making up their racial origins. Dominicans are at one and the same time gay and serious, sociable yet individualistic, humorous with tragic overtones, intellectual and imbued with religious fatalism. To know them well is to undergo a rewarding experience. Let the traveler seek out each of the above-named qualities in the light of everyday living.

Gaiety on Hispaniola takes the form of firecrackers sounding off at Christmas to greet the advent of the Lord's birth, while bells ring and crowds gather in the public square for the shared happiness of a fiesta. But the need for merriment does not depend on a fixed calendar date. There are music kiosks in every town, with municipal band concerts attracting crowds at night, at no cost, to dance the native *merengue* or simply to listen. Births, baptisms, weddings, and even funerals are occasions for pageantry. In short, the proverbial tropic languor is absent from practically all Dominican functions. New Year's Eve in Ciudad Trujillo is pandemonium, nothing less!

On the serious side, the country presents a less childlike and ingenuous picture. In the fields of art, literature, political science, architecture, and journalism there are notable currents at work. Here is a nation not content with merely drowsing in the sun. Dominicans are honestly and desperately bent on balancing their *dolce far niente* climate with an almost Anglo-Saxon gospel of work. They don't mind in the least being called the dynamos of the slumbering Caribbean.

Sociability is only one part of the Dominican character, springing from the easy gregariousness of African breeds, and blended with the formalism of Spanish pride, and the inscru-

table reserve of the Indian. Thus there is no rude, obtrusive familiarity among natives, even on the part of souvenir vendors or beggars. The tourist who has wearied of being jostled in foreign bazaars and market places will find Dominican behavior a restful change. Friendships are easily made among Latins who love nothing so much as companionship, but a Dominican is first an individual. He will wait before thrusting himself forward. He will never pluck your sleeve. Unless, that is, he is selling lottery tickets, in which case he will mumble at your heels for blocks.

Included in this social aspect is a deep-rooted concept of tolerance. No racial persecutions are licensed. When there have been border clashes with Negroes, the latter were Haitian invaders or illegal settlers, not Dominican citizens of African blood; in short, the issue was always political, not racial.

In contrast to the unrestrained primitivism of Indo-African background, Dominican tradition was for a long time ruled by the severities of Spanish etiquette. The duenna (*dueña*) system of chaperoning girls and young women led to a strict age of chivalry, with balcony scenes, fan and mantilla coquetry, and troubadours strumming their guitars before a grilled window. But modern literature, movies, and the advent of the United States Marines swept out much of medieval and nineteenth-century austerity. Modern youth in the Dominican Republic is self-reliant and reasonably free. This does not mean a breakdown of established social barriers and traditions, but a more mature capacity in the young to handle themselves. Not only is a good education available to all classes, but families of even moderate wealth make it a practice to send their children abroad for a few years of finishing school. For the rest, Dominican boys and girls are ardent sports lovers; they ride horseback, swim, play tennis, golf, and baseball—the last of these with a veritable passion. There are intercity, interisland, and international amateur baseball leagues that keep fans in a high fever for a good part of the year. In short, no longer bound by ancient and worn-out restrictions, today's citizens

of Hispaniola have become an intelligent, emancipated, and strongly individualistic people.

Humor plays a vital part in the daily life of all countries with Hispanic roots, though it is a humor tempered by a strong sense of melodrama. Evidence of this will be found in the police columns of Ciudad Trujillo's three newspapers, the morning issues of *La Nación* and *El Caribe,* and the afternoon daily called *El Urgente,* the "Urgent One." Here lovers' quarrels, robberies, or cases of drunken disorderliness (there are few murders) receive detailed and sardonic treatment by gifted scribes. But there are other newsworthy items that get into print because of a widespread hankering for good anecdotes. Thus the story of Papa Lindo, a highly civilized white rooster (known also as El Gallo Bernaluz or "The Bernaluz Cockerel" because his owner is a radio repairman named Bernaluz) made the front pages due to certain talents not usual in a chicken. It seems that Papa Lindo lives alone, sleeps in his master's bed, takes daily baths with soap and warm water, and hates other barnyard fowl. Hens leave him cold, since Papa Lindo prefers attending neighborhood movies, where he occupies his own seat and behaves properly throughout the performance, after which he is favored by the management with his preferred tidbit, an ice-cream cone. Added to all this, Papa Lindo adores people, particularly ladies. When petted, he coos sweetly and appreciatively. This prodigy of a bird (he weighs nine pounds) may be visited—and *is* visited—by strangers at all hours in his little garden plot beside the Bernaluz shop on the street of José Trujillo Valdés. No admission is charged, since Papa Lindo enjoys attention for its own sake. But there is always a handy ice-cream vendor lingering nearby, with a few ragged urchins waiting to see if the wonderful rooster needs any help in finishing his cone.

Competing with Papa Lindo for headlines, Ciudad Trujillo also boasts a sleepwalking dog named Paco. Normally quite shy and subdued, Paco changes character when he dreams, for he suddenly finds himself bold and brave, ready to take on

growling enemies three times his size. For Paco is a little fellow, squat and shaggy, known as an English Pinscher, a breed so numerous on Santo Domingo that one must presume its ancestors to have been brought over by Sir Francis Drake. In any case, this small walking mop of a dog has been seen threading his way through traffic, adventure bound and fast asleep. People never disturb the four-legged somnambulist, whose low-slung chassis with its cheerful wiggle brings motorists and pedestrians to a halt. In a pinch he is simply picked up, still sleeping, and carried to his home, which—happily—is not far from that of Papa Lindo.

Of course, there could be another slant to Paco's story. Since he is long haired, with a thick forelock that hangs sheepdog-fashion over his eyes, it may well be that he is wide awake and knows what goes on all the time, but prefers keeping up his act. In any case, whether conscious or snoozing, Paco has a portion of Ciudad Trujillo's sober citizens just where he wants them, sympathetically devoted and—perhaps—beautifully bluffed.

But the capital is not alone in harboring the implausible and disarming in anecdotes. Santiago de los Caballeros is, if anything, richer in local color and folkloric legend. Throughout the prosperous plantation lands of the Cibao the story is known of the Santiago patriarch who longed for a fine marble tomb in which to be laid out one day in state. Since one can never be sure that one's own funeral arrangements will be carried out as planned, he ordered a magnificent mausoleum sculptured in Italy, with a lifesized statue of himself hewn out of pure Carrara stone. The cost ran into many thousands before the sarcophagus ever left Europe. But this was nothing compared to the expense of transporting several tons of ornamental marble across an ocean to Puerto Plata and thence by mule over the narrow mountain passes to Santiago. When his tomb finally arrived the old gentleman was impoverished and he died forthwith. After the funeral, which took place in accordance with his instructions, a dismal disclosure awaited his

heirs. Children and grandchildren learned that grandfather had lavished his substance on himself. The bad news left them reeling, though not for long. With the resourcefulness characteristic of natives of the Cibao they found an excellent solution. Grandfather's spacious mausoleum had room for a lot more besides his coffin. Why not rent shelf space to other citizens who longed, once defunct, to rest in splendor they could not individually afford? In short, as time passed, between fifty and sixty additional caskets came to share the patriarch's handsome burial place at a neat annual fee. Thus, in a sense, grandfather restored the spent inheritance to his loving descendants.

Cibao sagacity is illustrated in yet another tale, namely the story of Carmen Bicicleta (Bicycle Carmen), an aged crone seen on the streets of Santiago at all hours of day or night. In fact, she earned her strange name because of a seeming ability to move about at record speed, appearing to be everywhere at the same time. It would not do to call Carmen Bicicleta a beggar, though she lives entirely from handouts that kind Santiago citizens provide, if only to see her run. At one time the ragged old lady was a respected *doña*, with property and a large family of children. But ill fortune had swallowed up her possessions, while her brood died, one by one, leaving old Carmen alone. It is said, however, that her popularity around town is enormous and the alms she receives are so generous that Bicycle Carmen is better heeled today than she was in her prime.

Finally Santiago, like Ciudad Trujillo, boasts its quota of animal historiettes. Of these the most fascinating concerns a bird vendor in the market place, who one recent morning offered at a special bargain price a parrot and a canary in the same cage. Needless to say, customers paused to inquire about the startling combination of two such divergent feathered creatures under one roof. "Ah," said the vendor, "but yes—it is the latest thing. The parrot he announces what the canary she will sing!"

The significant point about all such folk sagas and news items is the freshness and candor with which they are retailed

and accepted. In Latin countries no one who talks is without listeners, for the most part envious and admiring, hence everyone feels by nature endowed with Homeric gifts for narrative. "*Este es el cuento de nunca acabar,*" opens a favorite nursery story. ("This is the story of never-ending . . .") Interminably the muse is busy at her imaginative weaving.

Since no event is too insignificant for comment, even an individual who happens to be overweight and must—by physician's orders—go on a diet may enlist public sympathy for his ordeal. During December of 1948 no fewer than three Ciudad Trujillo burghers sat in various city parks, undergoing a ten-, twelve-, and fifteen-day starvation fast respectively. Each found himself surrounded by interested and impressed throngs, as well as priests, policemen, and newsreel photographers. Prominent clothing stores, aware of advertising possibilities, bestowed coats, hats, and haberdashery on the hunger strikers, while hotel and restaurant keepers clamored for their patronage (free) after resumption of normal eating habits could be counted on. In short, the dieting trio lost an agreeable number of pounds and walked home with arms loaded, plus an aureole of fame.

CHAPTER 29

THE LITERARY ACHIEVEMENTS

DISCOVERED by an adventurous sailor and subjugated by Spain's men of arms known as Conquistadores, Santo Domingo nevertheless became a receptacle of European culture that began taking root in the earliest days of colonization. For, with the men of action who, understandably, had neither time nor taste for books, there came also priests, monks, scholars, teachers—men of the spirit, in short—whose object was not the search for new lands or gold, but the propagation of Spanish religion and civilization.

Christopher Columbus himself, though poorly educated, put pen to paper and left for posterity a large correspondence with Their Majesties, Ferdinand and Isabella, as well as a detailed diary containing facts invaluable to the historian. But the first outstanding literary record produced on the island came from the hand of Bartolomé de las Casas, law student from Salamanca, who took monastic orders at Santo Domingo in the year 1502. Spending his most productive years in the Antilles, Las Casas left behind not only an inspiring record concerning native culture and the subsequent conversion of the Indians (*Historia de las Indias*) but around him gathered other chroniclers, Antonio de Montesinos, Fernán Pérez de Guzmán, Tomás de la Torre, Antonio de Remesal, Domingo de Vico y Uveda and countless others, all of them members of monastic brotherhoods. Among these the last named turned from his own Spanish tongue to the compilation of the first Arawak-Taíno syllabus and dictionary.

During the first fifty years of the colony all intellectual life centered about church pulpits, convent schools, and the freshly

founded university. Among outstanding minds marking this period were the following:

Alessandro Geraldini (1455–1524). Italian educator, tutor of the royal infantas at the court of Castile. Author of "Journey to the Lands below the Equinox," an excellent description of contemporary Dominican life. Geraldini, a doctor of letters and an inspired poet, also wrote ballads and odes.

Sebastián Ramírez de Fuenleal (?–1547). Bishop and governor, as well as first president of the Royal Audience, foremost grammarian and author of "Report on New Spain."

Alonso Zuazo (1466–1539). Member of the Royal Audience, whose work includes a scholarly "Memorandum on the Condition of the Indians on Santo Domingo and Cuba."

Juan de Echagoyán. Native of the Basque province of Biscay and emigrant to Santo Domingo, author of "Report on the Spanish Island" as well as numerous historic notes.

Alonso de Zorita (1512–1566). Historian and member of Royal Audience, diarist, correspondent, and author of an outstanding "History of New Spain."

Eugenio de Salazar de Alarcón (1530–1602). Madrid poet who went to the colony and compiled a collection of essays on contemporary literary efforts. He also wrote a lyric work, "Canto of Santo Domingo."

Micael de Carvajal (1490–?). First dramatist to promote a theater movement in the colony; author of "Tragedy of Josephine," and minor plays.

Lázaro Bejarano. Native of Seville, poet, satirist, and scholar of Erasmus, temporary governor of Curaçao, Aruba, and Bonaire, founder of Coro in Venezuela, and member of the Inquisition on Santo Domingo. An elegant stylist and benign friend of the Indians, author of "Apologetic Dialogues."

Juan de Castellanos (1522–1607). Poet and philosopher, known in particular for his "Elegies on Famed Men of the Indies."

The above list, a mere sampling of the many literary figures that moved across Hispaniola in the early colonial days, includes only men of Spanish birth or other European backgrounds, who emigrated from their homelands and spent their most productive years on Dominican soil. But soon their ranks were swollen by native-born talent of pure Spanish or part Indian and part African stock. Among the new and first Dominican-born authors are:

Francisco de Liendo (1527–1584). Priest and canon, one of the earliest to be ordained on the island, poet and religious philosopher whose works have been lost but are glowingly praised by contemporary writers.

Luis de Ángulo (1530–1560). Humorist, writer on feminine foibles and fashions, a theme neglected by most diarists of the period.

Elvira de Mendoza. First native poetess, whose verses—if not her reputation—vanished in the succession of wars, earthquakes, hurricanes, and other vicissitudes that struck the island in the centuries following her prime.

Leonor de Ovando. Postulant in the convent of Regina de la Española, noted for her blank verse and for a quintet of sonnets that represent the earliest example of Dominican poetry written (before 1580) by a woman.

Francisco Tostado de la Peña. Author of the first known Dominican sonnet by a native male poet, the "Lines of Welcome to Santo Domingo," written in 1573 (on the arrival of the royal auditor Eugenio de Salazar).

From 1580 on, the flowering of literary activity spread at such a pace that an itemized listing would lead far beyond the limits of this book. It is possible, therefore, merely to enumerate a fraction of prominent names:

Fray Alonso Pacheco
Fray Diego Ramírez

Fray Alonso de Espinosa
Fray Antonio de Calancha
Luis Gerónimo Alcocer
Gil González Dávila
Cristóbal de Llerena
Baltasar López de Castro
Fray Antonio de Valderrama
Fray Cristóbal Rodríguez Xuárez
Fray Pedro de Oviedo
Fray Domingo Fernández de Navarrete
Fray Fernando de Carvajal y Riviera
Montemayor de Cuenca
Pedro Álvarez de Mendoza
Andrés Núñez de Torra
Francisco Franco de Torquemada
Baltasar Fernández de Castro
Fray Diego Martínez
Tomasina de Leiva y Mosquera
Francisco Morillas

Stepping across the threshold of a new century, the procession continues after 1700 with less emphasis on ecclesiastic writings. Much of this period's output is academic, judicial, politico-historic, with a sudden emergence of dramatic arts. Salient authors are:

Domingo Pantaleón Álvarez de Abréu
Francisco Pujol
Juan Ignacio Rendón y Dorsuna
Antonio Dávila de Coca y Landeche
Pedro José Peguero
Pedro Agustín Morell de Santa Cruz
Antonio Sánchez Valverde
Antonio de Villaurrutia
Jacobo de Villaurrutia
Antonio Meléndez Bazán
Agustín Madrigal Cordero

As early as 1783 a French visitor, Moreau de Saint Méry, reported a printing press in operation at Santo Domingo, while some sources maintain that the art of typesetting had already been mastered behind monastery walls some fifty years before. In any case, by the year 1800 the printing firm of Andrés Josef Blocquerst was doing a flourishing business, impressing its name and a proper publication date on every volume that left its bindery. But literary inspiration was due for an eclipse as the century of the Haitian invasions took its course. Such names as Toussaint L'Ouverture, Jean Jacques Dessalines, and Henri Christophe overshadowed poets and men of all the arts except warfare. The voice of the muses was hushed. Having suffered endless invasions by European powers as well, Dominicans quoted an ironic stanza written by the cleric Juan Vázquez of Santiago:

Yesterday I was born a Spaniard,
This afternoon I became French,
Last night they made me Ethiopian,
And the British may take me today—
It's hard for a Dominican
To pick his way!

During this period some of the country's best minds fled into exile, mainly to Cuba and Venezuela, contributing their work to the artistic and literary stores of those countries. Among prominent refugees of literary repute the following stand out:

José Francisco Heredia y Mieses
Domingo Heredia y Mieses
Ignacio Heredia y Campuzano
Leonardo del Monte y Medrano
Jesús del Monte y Mena
Antonio del Monte y Tejada
Francisco Muñoz del Monte

Esteban Pichardo y Tapia
Gaspar de Arredondo y Pichardo
Lucas de Ariza
José Antonio Bernal y Muñoz
Fray José Félix Ravelo
José Gregorio Quintanó y Valera
Juan de Mata Tejada

The last of these introduced lithography to Cuba, while Quintanó was a renowned authority on criminal law, and Fray Ravelo's scholarly attainments earned him the post of rector at the University of Havana. At the same institution the Dominican anatomist Bernal y Muñoz became dean of the medical school. All the other intellectuals here listed were prolific writers, authorities on jurisprudence, students of oceanography, novelists, poets. Their work was earnest and substantial despite the distress of rootlessness and exile. Only in their verses did these expatriates give way to the gnawing nostalgia that filled their hearts.

In the absence of its leading writers, Santo Domingo turned to journalism for literary fare, which brought about a flowering of pamphlets, gazettes, tabloids, and paper-backed tracts on political issues of the day. Courageous editors gained prominence in this era of danger and confusion, among them Juan Sánchez Ramírez; José Núñez de Cáceres, long a governor of the island; and Antonio María Pineda, promoter of the first unofficial and independent newspaper, *La Gaceta,* of Santo Domingo.

A few writers and poets who did not emigrate during the Haitian occupation left manuscripts for posterity, but stringent censorship caused many of these works to remain unsigned. Nevertheless, some had the courage to step forward and be counted, among these the blind pamphleteer and popular versemonger Manuel Fernández. Other itinerant rhymesters, too poor to leave the country, yet too beset with poetic ardor

to remain silent, were the beggar Justiniano García, known popularly as Utiano because of the way he garbled his own first name, and a gifted improviser, Meso Mónica.

On a higher level the following fearless scribes made themselves heard:

Manuel Rodríguez
Marcos Cabral y Aybar
Ana de Osorio
Manuela Rodríguez
José Román Hernández
Juan de Diós Correa Cruzado

Finally the occupied colony was not without its collaborators who believed Haitian rule a permanent fixture with which one might as well compromise. Some of these, notably Tomás Bobadilla y Briones and José Joaquín del Monte y Maldonado, not only turned their pen to the service of the conquerors but rose to high political office as a consequence. Others, like Manuel Joaquín del Monte, Joaquín González, and José María Caminero, created a new polyglot medium that combined French, Spanish, and African verbiage into a startling and unmistakably West Indian patois.

But before the nineteenth century had run half its course a violent change took place. On February 27, 1844, Santo Domingo won back its independence amid a resurgence of literary and poetic inspiration. The first national anthem, "Cancion Dominicana," was written by Félix María del Monte, while a galaxy of authors made their bid for the country's future hall of fame:

Juan José Illas
Encarnación Echavarría Vilaseca de del Monte
Nicolás Ureña de Mendoza
Manuel de Jesús de Peña y Reinoso
José Joaquín Pérez

Salomé Ureña de Henríquez
Francisco Gregorio Billini (short-term president of Santo Domingo)
Javier Angulo Guridi
Antonio Delfín Madrigal
Felipe Dávila Fernández de Castro
José Francisco Pichardo
Eugenio Perdomo
Félix Mota y Veloz
Manuel Rodríguez Objío
Gastón Fernando Deligne
Emilio Prud'homme y Maduro (author of present national anthem)
José Francisco Pellerano
Federico Henríquez y Carvajal
José Francisco Pellerano
Máximo Gómez y Báez
Bartolomé Olegario Pérez
Mariano Antonio Soler y Meriño
Rafael Alfredo Deligne
Luis María Castillo
Enrique Henríquez
Bienvenido Salvador Nouel y Bobadilla
Arturo Bautista Pellerano Castro
Emilio Morel
Manuel María Valencia
Nicolás Ureña
Juan Isidro Ortea
Apolinar Tejera
César Nicolás Pensón y Tejera

All the above, and a plethora of additional names, can be listed as prophets and poet laureates of freedom. Most of these writers had known political oppression at home, hence they lent their best energies to the fight against tyranny abroad, particularly during Cuba's struggle for independence.

Finally, with the last quarter of the nineteenth century and the transition into the twentieth, Dominican literature entered its golden age. Now the writers who were not impelled by anger, fear, rebellion, or the need to grind some specific political ax found their true voice. A new romanticism was born, its leading figure being the handsome and chivalresque poet Fabio Fiallo, himself a legend of adventurous gallantry. He is the island's great disciple of Heinrich Heine, Alfred de Musset, Gustavo Adolfo Bécquer—a singer of lovesongs such as the exquisite "Misterio" and the extraordinary, English-titled "For Ever." Among Fiallo's contemporaries, moderns and modernists, a vast company can be lined up, of whom only a few are here named:

Victor Garrido
José María Bernard
Gabino Alfredo Morales
Gabriel Ángel Morillo
Raúl Cabrera
Luis Emilio Garrido
José Audilio Santana
Primitivo Herrera
L. Hungría Lovelace
Virgilio Martínez Reyna
J. Onésimo Polanco
Tulio Manuel Cestero
Rafael Octavio Galván
Valentín Giró
Altagracia Saviñón
Osvaldo Bazil
Federico Bermúdez
Rafael Damirón
Ramón Emilio Jiménez
Baldemaro Rijo
José Furcy Pichardo
Juan Goico Alix

Julio A. Piñeyro
Manuel A. Patín Maceo
Ricardo Pérez Alfonseca
Manuel Llanes
Moreno Jimenes
Vigil Díaz
Gladio Hidalgo
Livia Veloz

This does not nearly cover the roster of Dominican lyricists, let alone the vast company of prose writers. Among the latter a great preoccupation with Indian subjects became paramount at the time when France's Chateaubriand wrote *Atala,* Brazil's José de Alencar apostrophized the jungle native *O Guaraní,* and Anglo-Saxon literature was enriched with Indian lore in James Fenimore Cooper's *Leatherstocking Tales* or Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's *Hiawatha.* In keeping with this indigenous trend, Dominican chroniclers and novelists looked to their own soil for fitting themes and brought forth the following:

Javier Angulo Guridi: *Maguana; La Ciguapa; Iguaniona* (drama)
Félix María del Monte: *Ozema, la Virgen Indiana* (drama)
Manuel de Jesús Galván: *Enriquillo*

The last-named historical novel, dealing with the heroic life of the chieftain Guarocuya, occupies a niche of honor in Dominican letters. Nowhere else, outside the diaries of Fray Bartolomé de las Casas, is there to be found a more vivid and detailed picture of early colonial times and of the intrigues rampant at the viceregal court of Diego Columbus.

After Galván, another historian turned to novel writing in the era of Santo Domingo's occupation by the U.S. Marines. This was the impassioned Federico García Godoy whose work *El Derrumbe* (*The Downfall*) met with censor trouble after

publication. The entire edition was destroyed by fire and the plates were melted down at the order of the American commandant.

Today's novelists, in conclusion, culminate a proud and incredibly prolific procession of which—again—only a few of the more salient names shall be culled:

Arturo Freites Roque: *Inexorable*
Dionisio Pieter: *Horas de Bohemia*
Horacio Read: *Los Civilizadores; Venus Andrógina; La Absurda*
Jayme Colson: *El Cabo Chepe*
Enrique Aguiar: *Don Cristóbal*

In the realm of nonfiction there are essayists, critics, philosophers, and authorities on historical, political, anthropological, and geological data, who can likewise be represented here only by a handful of names:

Casimiro Nemesio de Moya
Vetilio Arredondo
Manuel Ubaldo Gómez
Joaquín S. Incháustegui
J. Marino Incháustegui
Luis Emilio Alemar
Vicente Tolentino Rojas
Luis Padilla d'Onís
Américo Lugo
Eugenio María Hostos
E. Rodríguez Demorizi
Rafael Augusto Sánchez
Max Henríquez Ureña

This fragmentary review of Dominican literary personalities gains true significance only if it is remembered that the country here dealt with is less than half the size of Kentucky, or one

third that of Georgia. One would be hard put to it, anywhere on the American continent, to find an equal concentration of cultural activity upon so small a geographic scale.

Also, and this is of even greater significance, the Golden Age of Dominican letters has by no means already faded into the past. There is at this writing an intense and productive literary life pervading the country, fed through the new impetus afforded by the enlarged National University. Creative talent is on the increase, and its chances for fullest development are better than at any time in Santo Domingo history. The tools are there, awaiting the lowliest of poets yet to be born.

CHAPTER 30

MUSIC AND FOLKLORE

LITTLE is known of aboriginal tunes, texts, and instruments that gave voice to the Indian inhabitants of Haiti or Quisqueya before arrival of the white man. But considerable research has been undertaken by specialists in Arawak-Taíno customs, among them Papito Rivera, Emiliano Tejera, Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo, and Flérida de Nolasco. From these sources it is known that the island's pre-Columbian music consisted largely of reed fifes and percussion instruments, some of which reappear in modified forms among country orchestras today. One of these is known as La Canoíta (Little Canoe) due to its boat shape and paddlelike clapper. Its purpose must have been purely rhythmic, to beat out time to ancient *areítos* or tribal dances, since no possible tune can be drawn from it even by friction. But the relation to the Cuban *güiras* and *maracas* is obvious, indicating that Caribbean aborigines furnished the basis for much that is characteristic in Latin American music today.

Since the Conquistadores themselves came from an extrovert country where folksongs and gypsy dancing played an important role in daily living, Spanish tunes soon swept across the island colony. Lutes, dulcimers, and guitars were favorite European instruments of troubadour times, all of them suited to accompaniment of the then current ballads and songs of the romanciers. As early as 1565 a famous Spanish minstrel, Diego Risueño (Smiling Diego) ventured forth to the West Indies and brought with him the latest "hit" tunes from abroad. He sang in Monte Cristi, Puerto Príncipe (Port au Prince), San-

tiago, and Bayamo, teaching the natives to dance a Sevillian *zapateo* or double-quick heel tap.

With the subsequent arrival of African slaves, there came a new syncopated rhythm that lent complex overtones to the already existing blend of Indian and Spanish tunes. Two Creole sisters from Santiago de los Caballeros, Teodora and Micaela Gines, made a name for themselves by adopting African gourds as complements to their lutes and mandolins, accepting also the Negro patois for their popular couplets. A gifted black-skinned rhymester followed in their wake, Manuel Mónica by name, but known as Meso Mónica. Though poor and illiterate, this highly articulate freedman lived into the late eighteenth century and made political events the subject of his recitations. He became a forerunner of countless bold and satirical versifiers whose colorful speech served to needle and ridicule the pompous or the corrupt in high office.

The flower of Dominican music in colonial times was, however, an adaptation of the Spanish *romancero* or the romantic ballad. Splendid examples of these have survived from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, to be collected only recently by a young Dominican poetess, Edna Garrido, and an American specialist in folkloric art, Dr. Ralph Steele Boggs. Among the most ancient narrative songs listed by these two authorities are:

Delgadina (Versions of San Francisco de Macorís, Las Charcas —Ázua, and San Juan—Puerto Rico)
Gerineldo (Versions of Ázua and of Puerto Rico)
Angelina (Version of San Juan la Maguana)
Don Albertos y Don Carlos, or "The Unfaithful Wife"
Conde Niño
Santa Catalina
El Marinerito, or "The Little Sailor"

Other scholarly authorities on this early phase of Dominican music are Pedro Henríquez Ureña, Manuel J. Andrade, Julio

Arzeno, Esteban Peña Morell, Enrique de Marchena, and Julio Alberto Hernández. All these deemed it a sacred task to search for and disclose the earliest vestiges of melodic culture in that spot of the New World where the white man first took root. The music of the Dominicans is the first music of the Americas, as measured from the time when it first took written form.

Inspired by the zeal of Dr. Ralph Steele Boggs from Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina, a Dominican Folklore Society was founded in January of 1946, with a membership including most of the above names as well as the painter Ernesto Scott of Ciudad Trujillo, the writer and philologist Sebastián Emilio Valverde of Santiago, Emil Boirie of Samaná, Rubén Suro of La Vega, Raúl González of Barahona, Manuel de Jesús Javier García of El Seibo, and Ramón Díaz and Luis F. Alberti of San Cristóbal. The society's address is Calle Lea de Castro Number 12, Ciudad Trujillo, and its current president and two vice-presidents are respectively Edna Garrido, Consuelo Nivar, and Manuel de Jesús Goico. A bulletin in magazine form is published four times a year with seasonal texts (Christmas carols, Holy Week chants, Easter couplets) as well as reproductions from ancient musical manuscripts. Dances, roundelays, and children's games are thus carefully transcribed and made available to schools or playground officials. In short, a definite movement is afoot to preserve and cherish for posterity all that can yet be salvaged from a stormy and destructive past.

As for contemporary Dominican music, its development from colonial times can be easily traced. During France's control of Haiti and the frequent Haitian incursions upon the eastern part of the island, Spanish rhythms were colored by eighteenth- and nineteenth-century patterns from Paris salons. Also, Italian opera made its appearance in the New World through various touring companies that played short stands in Caribbean ports, leading to subsequent importation of European music teachers. Under these influences such native Dominican dances as the *mangulina*, the *punto*, the Cuban *upa*, and the Seville-derived

zapateo soon gave way to polkas, mazurkas, quadrilles, and aristocratic waltzes. Nevertheless, enough intrinsic character and racial flavor survived this influx to modify the European compositions and translate them into West Indian form. Out of this modification an authentic Dominican dance evolved, called the *merengue*. This is a seductive blend of steps reminiscent of the Cuban *rumba* and the *son*, in two-quarter time, with an accented pace that calls for considerable *élan*. Structurally the music breaks into two themes of sixteen measures each, the second usually in the key of the dominant or of the relative minor of the first theme. While the refrain is rendered usually as a solo, the chorus enlists all orchestra hands and lends itself readily to mass singing, with hand clapping and alternate responses.

Since this transformation of European melodic strains into typically Caribbean rhythms took place in rural areas rather than in the cities, Dominican society at first snubbed the *merengue* as a vulgar peasant dance. Its sensual zest was reminiscent of the seventeenth-century Italian *gagliarda*, once denounced by the clergy as "an invention of the devil." But prejudice in time succumbed to the diabolical charm. The *merengue* is today the most captivating and popular Dominican ballroom number.

Outstanding composers of recent successes in this medium are:

Juan Francisco García (known as Don Pancho)
Ramón Díaz
Ricardo Ramírez
Enrique Mejía-Arredondo
Rafael Ignacio
Rafael Almanzar
Augusto Vega
Luis Emilio Mena
Luis Kalaf

Luis F. Alberti
Luis Rivera
Pedro N. Pérez

In conclusion it should be noted that the old national anthem, composed by Juan Bautista Alfonseca (1802–1875), was superseded by the inspiring tune of José Reyes (1844–1863), who studied under Alfonseca. The words are by the poet Emilio Prud'homme. In quality this hymn bears comparison to France's *Marseillaise* or to the extraordinarily exciting national anthem of the Republic of Mexico.

CHAPTER 31

PAINTING AND SCULPTURE

OVERSHADOWED by the impressive cultures of such continental peoples as the Aztec, Inca, and Maya, the Indians of the Caribbean isles were long regarded as unworthy of the archeologist's attention. Their arts, predominantly miniature in dimension, were deemed the playful manifestations of a nomadic and purely pastoral people, not given to serious enterprise. The error of this supposition was exposed by the research made under the auspices of the Institute of Anthropology, with the co-operation of the University of Santo Domingo.

The studies were conducted by the Institute's director, Ing. Emil de Boyrie Moya, and his assistants, Dr. René Herrera Fritot, and Dr. Carlos González, in Duarte Province, known also as Provincia Libertador. Here, along the right bank of the river Chacuey, which is a tributary of the Yuna, a ceremonial plaza was excavated in the settlement of Los Indios, District of Dajabón, not far from the town of Cotuí. This plaza, some three hundred yards from the stream, is almost one square kilometer in extent and of circular design. It is bordered by a wide stone-paved avenue, evidently used for ancient processionals, with two main entrance portals at the east and west end of the central space. Marking these entrances are high stone dolmens reminiscent of the prehistoric Druid markers found at Stonehenge, England.

From the western portal a double avenue, even more richly studded with stone monuments, leads straight to the waters of the river Chacuey in silent evidence of some ancient ceremonial that called for immersion. Below the water's surface lie

other carved rocks and petroglyph tablets, most of them hewn from a hard blue stone. Since all these configurations indicate some relation to the myriads of household gods scattered throughout Hispaniola, it is obvious that the slate-paved plaza of Chacuey and Los Indios was used for religious ceremonials.

This is not the whole story, however. Many of the bordering rocks show the earliest known traces of bas-relief sculpture in the Antilles, and from the narrative images the further deduction arises that the great plaza served as a sports arena, a stage for war games, folk dances, singing contests, and the first rudiments of drama. In short, the sculptor's art antedates literature, since—long before the evolution of language or script, not to mention printing presses—masons and stonecarvers taught mankind the art of recording life in rock.

Following disclosure in 1948 of the above discoveries, the Galería de Bellas Arts (Art Museum) in Ciudad Trujillo promoted an exhibition of Arawak-Taíno sculptures, including magnified reproductions of already available miniature figurines from the Museo Nacional. The displays were to be set up in the gallery salons on Conde Street, with free admission to the public.

The project was not realized until December of that year, but its unveiling brought together a gathering of representative artists from all parts of the Republic. Outstanding among these were Enrique Martínez Richiez, Darío Suro, Antonio Prats Ventós, Radamés Mejía, and Carlos González Núñez. Among younger Dominican artists, the painter Ernesto Scott and the sculptor Vicioso also deserve mention, besides the outstanding feminine portraitist and landscape expert, Clara Ledesma. The latter's colorful native scenes (she paints *bohío* interiors, coconut jungles, water-front vistas, and other eloquent slices of Dominican life) have been shown at Rio de Janeiro and in other South American capitals.

But more important for the foreign visitor is the peculiar relation of Dominican art to the most modern trends that are upheld in both Europe and the United States. Even the un-

initiated observer, unacquainted with the catalogued names of the country's artists, will see that in the blend of Indian designs, African primitivism, and a daring modern expressionist use of color, work is being done here on a par with that of Picasso and Braque. What is more, the linear purity of Taíno patterns has strongly influenced architectural forms, so that much of today's construction in the Republic has ceased to be simply "functional modern" and is becoming more and more an organic native style. Here is a practical example that might well be followed by other countries of Indian background. Instead of adopting hybrid alien standards of ornament and design they can profitably revive indigenous arts and crafts, from which to re-create a culture that is not borrowed but is strictly their own.

CHAPTER 32

RELIGION

AS BEFITS a people with the distinction of being the only nation in the world whose flag bears the Bible in its coat of arms, the Dominican Republic is a haven of religious tolerance. Here Jew, Mohammedan, heathen, and Christian live side by side without fear of ostracism or active persecution. Large representative creeds or small individualistic sects enjoy the utmost elbowroom.

The country is of course predominantly Roman Catholic, as are all Latin American nations of Spanish or Portuguese tradition. Thus the greatest number of Dominican churches belong to this ancient faith. During early colonial times the island considered itself under the special protectorate of Our Lady of Mercies (Nuestra Señora de la Merced) only to replace this Spanish madonna with a native apparition known as La Altagracia (Virgin of Highest Grace). But the hierarchy of Catholic saints is large, and there is endless room for ever new manifestations of divinity. Hence in recent years La Altagracia has shared the veneration of her devotees with another holy image, the Virgin of Fátima, who first appeared to the Christian world on May 13, 1917, while the First World War was still raging.

The name of this madonna derives from the village of Fátima in Portugal where three shepherd children, Lucia dos Santos, and her cousins Francisco and Jacinta Marto, passed an olive grove and saw a vision in a flash of light atop one of the trees. Although the youngsters were only ten, nine, and seven years old respectively, and possessed a rustic minimum of education, the Virgin spoke to them of world-shaking matters and in adult fashion. She predicted that the war was in its

final stage, but that another would follow within a generation, to be heralded by northern lights. Furthermore, Russia must be converted to the true faith, so as to end the depredations of Communism. Just before vanishing, the Mother of God also told Francisco and Jacinta that they would soon die, leaving Lucia alone to keep the heavenly contact.

Skeptics laughed as the children told their story, and well-meaning villagers demanded proof by requesting on a given rainy day that the sun break through the clouds and drop from its accustomed orbit. Actually five months later such a day came about, as thousands knelt in a field and saw, or believed they saw, the sun emerge through a downpour and "fling itself crazily to earth," halting and returning to its heavenly place just in time to avert what would have been our planet's holocaust. From this point on, believers came in droves, to worship at the holy grove and to find miraculous healing for their ills. When the two younger children died soon thereafter of influenza, public credulity mounted. Finally, in 1938, the aurora borealis shone with particular brightness in many parts of the world while men's ears already caught the approaching din of World War II. This clinched the Fátima story. The Vatican, moving slowly in such, did not authenticate the miracles, but gave authorization to the erection of a shrine. In the fall of 1949 a beautiful white church of blended Renaissance-Baroque style was inaugurated on the already famous spot, with more than two hundred thousand pilgrims in attendance, among them a Braganza princess, wife of the Spanish Pretender Don Juan, and her small blind daughter María del Pilar.

As for the Virgin herself, she was given form in portraits and statues according to the description offered by the three shepherd children who first saw her (the surviving Lucia grew up to become a nun). In keeping with naïve conceptions of childhood, Our Lady of Fátima is thus a white-robed figure of doll-like prettiness, with a short body of juvenile proportions in relation to the head, upon which rests an enormous domed crown.

Being relatively a modern among the Church's holy images, the Virgin of Fátima seems geared to today's world. That is, unlike traditional saints and the uncounted older incarnations of herself, the Portuguese madonna does not stay put. She is a world traveler, and she gets about by plane. That is, while the original votive statue remains on the altar of the village church, other more or less identical reproductions are sent abroad periodically on pilgrimages into far countries (Canada, the United States, Brazil, etc.) where people eagerly await the visitor.

During the Christmas season of 1948 the Virgin passed through the Caribbean on her second jaunt. In the Dominican Republic she was greeted by throngs that waited at the airport, without her crown; this was put on her head by Archbishop Pittini after she descended from the plane and mounted the ornamental float that would pass through the streets of every major town and village in ceremonial procession. Everywhere the Virgin with the childlike face was fervently acclaimed, for she wrought many miracles in passing. To name only one: at Baní on the road to Ázua a sixty-four-year-old paralytic widow, Juana Luisa Díaz de Mejía, who had been mute and immobilized for twelve months, was wheeled to the doorway of her hut as the procession approached. At sight of the holy image, enthroned amid flowers and sputtering tapers under protective glass cones, the sick woman recovered her voice. More than that, she rose from her chair and ran into the street singing the Virgin's praises.

In contrast to such dramatic events, Protestantism on Hispaniola contents itself with a more matter-of-fact and sober role. To begin with, Wesleyan Methodism was brought to Santo Domingo during the nineteenth century by Negro refugees, and preliminary missions had been established through Haiti as early as 1824. A third and by far the most effective wave of proselytes arrived in 1867, including sturdy and passionate evangelists whose descendants survive on Samaná Peninsula today. Among these patriarchs were John Jones,

Moses Shepherd, Wesley Bannet, Solomon Redmon, Paul Newes, Elijah King, Benjamin Williams, Peter Robert Van der Horst, Eli Kelly, Washington King, and a score of others, with names that have since been handed down to grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

But apart from this Afro-American nucleus of Protestantism, which gained strength through the evangelistic services of British pastors, a white missionary movement entered the country in 1920. Late that year the Presbyterian, Methodist, and United Brethren churches combined to form the Board for Christian Work in Santo Domingo. This board projected what might be called a Christian Community Church in the Dominican Republic, to be named officially the Dominican Evangelical Church. The work proceeded via the neighboring island of Puerto Rico, where Protestantism looked back upon a sound record. According to the board's current superintendent, Dr. Barney N. Morgan, the church became at once a national institution without direct denominational affiliations, formed in the "finest ecumenical tradition." That is, no vested interests had to be uprooted; no denominational traditions had to be lived down. With the First Church, the Evangelical Cathedral in Ciudad Trujillo, as a center, twenty-two organized churches and congregations now encircle the country and give spiritual ministry to people of all classes. In the capital a monthly English service is maintained for foreigners, as well as a weekly English Sunday school. National organizations or women's and young peoples' societies and choirs also help to enliven and unify the work. An annual Institute of Religious Education has been held for seventeen years and a weekly broadcast has come over the air on Thursday evenings for thirteen years. The movement has thus become self-governing through its General Assembly, and self-propagating through the growth of membership support. The ministry is wholly national, not foreign.

While the Dominican Republic is dotted with a network of efficient Catholic seminaries, schools, convents, and nurseries,

the Protestant Church has also taken a hand in education. Three elementary schools have been opened in outlying towns, each in time producing graduate teachers, nurses, and leaders in other fields, who have been stimulated to promote further expansion. Opportunities are thus afforded in sections where government schools have as yet made only minor progress.

Again, though the Catholic Church operates most of the country's hospitals, orphanages, and other charitable institutions, the Protestant element has not been inactive in this field of public welfare. In 1921 an American doctor and two nurses opened a dispensary for the poor, which has since become Ciudad Trujillo's one-hundred-bed Hospital Internacional. Here new standards in medical techniques, nursing care, and hospitalization have been set up for the whole Republic. In 1922 the first Protestant school of nursing was established, from which 107 graduates have gone forth to date. These in turn are directing the nursing service in no fewer than seven of the large government hospitals, five of which have been built since the work began, the public-health nursing service, and the vital training school of the Dominican Red Cross. In addition a daily general clinic for the poor, weekly baby and prenatal clinics, and a general hospital service including laboratory and X ray under an all-Dominican staff of doctors and nurses, plus two American missionary nurses, now minister to the sick of all classes drawn from all parts of the country.

Finally the Board for Christian Work in Santo Domingo, which has its New York offices at 156 Fifth Avenue, wields a spreading intellectual influence through the Librería Dominicana, the best organized bookstore in the Republic. This establishment is a social and educational center that amply justifies its motto "Estamos aquí para servir" ("We are here to serve"). It has built its own two-story home, with a fully equipped two-press printing shop, while selling more than sixty-five thousand dollars' worth of books a year. It acts as agent for the American Bible Society and enjoys a monthly sale of some ten thousand copies of the *Reader's Digest*, Span-

ish edition. In addition, the Librería Dominicana sponsors lectures, concerts, song recitals, besides operating a reading room for poor students. It contributes four thousand dollars a year to Protestant mission work and maintains a student pastor in one of the churches.

Naturally the above record of three potent Protestant denominations does not bar other sectarian movements. As everywhere else in the world, Christian Science has spread its doctrine into the Caribbean, with the principles of Mary Baker Eddy gaining a ready hearing. Lutheranism, too, is on the march. There is also a mission of Seventh Day Adventists. And lastly, though its religious specifications are of an unique and abstract sort, Masonry enjoys a prominent place in Dominican life. There is at Ciudad Trujillo a Masonic cathedral (Scottish Rite) with a ceremonial hall dominated by a seven-foot-high Rose Croix of blond sandalwood, with the flower relief in red mahogany and the leafy stems of a natural green lignous grain. Nineteen Blue Lodges operate throughout the country's interior. Probably 95 per cent of the population, however, is Roman Catholic.

The National Economy

CHAPTER 33

THE FINANCIAL STRUCTURE

FEW are the Latin American nations in which the peso is at par with the American dollar, but the Dominican Republic is one of those. There is little in that statement to startle one, unless the country's history is examined. It then becomes nothing short of amazing that economic stability, coupled with an extremely favorable balance of trade, could have been achieved in so short a time.

Not only have the Dominicans had to struggle against Spain, Haiti, and France, but they have also had to bear the burden of a series of inept leaders whose idea of financing their country's affairs was to borrow from foreigners, negotiating a new loan to pay off the old, and cherishing a touching faith in Santa Claus. Throughout the nineteenth century and the first three decades of the present one, the Dominican ship of state was rudderless. Land was turned over to foreign bondholders, who grew sugar, paid Dominican labor a pittance, and moved to another spot when the former one had been exhausted.

It was when Dutch, German, and French bondholders pressed their governments to intervene, and their respective warships showed up off Santo Domingo to enforce payments, that the United States, invoking the Monroe Doctrine, sent them packing and arranged to control Dominican customs with a view to paying off these European obligations, not to mention those in the States.

This was the situation when President Trujillo assumed office in 1930. The United States controlled all customs. A worldwide depression was in full bloom. Eighteen days after he took office, his capital city was destroyed by a hurricane. The na-

tional revenue had fallen from $15,000,000 to $7,000,000 (not enough to run a small town in our country), and there was a foreign debt of $20,000,000. Surely an inauspicious start.

The foreign debt was represented by two bond issues of ten millions each, the first issued in 1922 and running twenty years, the second in 1926, to mature in 1940. Both issues provided for sinking-fund payment to begin in 1930, which was a ruinous arrangement. With revenues of $7,000,000, the country was called upon to pay $1,750,000 to the sinking fund, plus 5.5-per-cent interest ($900,000), or nearly $2,750,000. The depression and the hurricane of 1930 made it totally impossible.

In 1932, sinking-fund payments had to be suspended, but not the interest. All other Latin American countries suspended *all* payments except Haiti and Venezuela.

The United States, which, through its direction of Dominican customs, took out interest, amortization, and a maximum 4-per-cent administrative charge, reluctantly agreed to the suspension of sinking-fund payments, even though it violated the convention. Neither nation was happy about it, but there was no choice.

Because of pressure from United States holders of foreign bonds, Congress had authorized the creation of the Foreign Bondholders' Protective Council, which President Roosevelt appointed. All claimant bondholders were referred to this body. Secretary Hull suggested to President Trujillo that the Dominican case be put before the council. Upon Trujillo's agreement, this became the first case settled by that group.

The solution was simple. The council, theoretically acting for the bondholders, extended the maturity dates of the two issues so that sinking-fund payments could be met. The 1942 bonds were extended to 1961 and the 1940 issue to 1969, with the annual sinking-fund payments reduced to a level that could be paid without hardship. Our State Department construed this as compliance with the original convention.

President Roosevelt and Secretary Hull, promoting the Good

Neighbor policy, wanted to change the convention. Accordingly, in 1940 Trujillo, no longer president but ambassador-at-large, went to Washington to negotiate what has since become known as the Trujillo-Hull pact, and which became effective April 1, 1941. By its terms:

1. The customs receivership was terminated;
2. The two governments agreed to appoint jointly a representative of the bondholders;
3. The Dominican Republic agreed to make sinking-fund and interest payments to this representative.

The terms of the Trujillo-Hull convention were followed for six years and on July 21, 1947, the remaining balance of foreign debt, $10,000,000, was paid off in a lump sum, making the Dominican Republic the first nation in the world to rid itself of foreign debt and foreign bondholders. The first ten million had been paid off in smaller installments between 1930 and 1941.

The present Dominican budget system was set up by Charles G. Dawes and has proved excellent. Since 1931 the national budget has never been overspent.

For many years Santo Domingo had been using only American money, having discarded its own currency, which had signally failed to inspire public confidence. On October 23, 1947, new Dominican currency was launched. No pressure was applied to make people accept it, nor was any penalty imposed for continuing to use American money. Yet the public thronged the banks to exchange United States paper and coins for Dominican, at par. Today in the cities both currencies are used interchangeably, but in the more remote sections one encounters a distinct reluctance to accept American money if Dominican is available. This native currency is backed dollar for dollar by American dollars and gold; there are some $20,000,000 now in circulation.

One wonders how this came about. As emphasized in another

chapter, when President Trujillo came to power he cleaned out all the drones in the administration, welcoming into his official family only those who were both able and industrious. The country went to work. Its immediate goal was to become a seller nation in place of a buyer nation. Rice culture was begun on a huge scale; banana, cacao, tobacco, and coffee growers were encouraged; a strong conservation program was launched, including new methods of agriculture and soil management.

Slowly the tide began to turn, until in 1936 the nation had a favorable balance of trade amounting to $5,000,000. Contrast this with 1948, when Santo Domingo exported $82,000,000 worth of produce and imported $53,000,000 worth, a favorable balance of $29,000,000.

It is confidently expected that the next ten years will see an accelerated rate of improvement. Dominican policy, with respect to both hemispheric and world trade, is to try to reduce trade preferences and commercial restrictions. Her progress to date has been made despite the fact that, unlike some other Caribbean countries, she has enjoyed no preferences. Her influence is thrown behind tariff reductions and removal of obstacles to free inter-American commerce. Particular bitterness is occasioned by the strong preference given Cuban sugar by the United States, which also agrees to accept more sugar even from Peru and Nicaragua than from the Dominican Republic. Currently there are indications that the Dominican efforts toward freer interchange will meet with success. If this happens, her economy will surge forward all the faster.

Selling more sugar to the United States is of vital importance. Britain has been taking all the Dominican sugar and paying for it in dollars, but Britain's ability to pay in dollars is diminishing, hence the strenuous efforts to knock down any artificial hurdles.

Diversification of agriculture has by no means removed sugar as the leading crop and the main source of governmental reve-

nue. Of a total tax income of $55,000,000, in 1947, sugar and molasses paid $16,000,000, placing them well in front.

Direct taxes account for a relatively small percentage of the whole. There is, for example, the *cédula,* a tax imposed upon everybody for his identification card, which must be carried always. This tax is graduated according to income, but the top figure is $500, a remarkably modest amount for people in the higher brackets. The *cédula* produces only $1,200,000. Until 1949 there was no income tax beyond this, but now a very mild one has been imposed, ranging from one per cent on $3,000–$5,000 incomes to 7 per cent on $100,000 and more. The corporation tax runs somewhat higher. Add to these the income from urban real-estate taxes (rural real estate is tax free), which yield only $160,000, and the inheritance tax, bringing $25,000, and you will see how little a part direct taxation plays.

Like most Latin Americans, the Dominican wants his taxes hidden. He will pay seven dollars for an American shirt without a whimper, whereas he would scream if you told him he was paying four dollars for the shirt and three dollars tax. This is what makes living in Santo Domingo anything but cheap. True, the wage level is high as compared with neighboring countries, but the hidden import duties and domestic taxes boost the cost of living to a point that makes New Yorkers feel at home.

Naturally, these hidden duties are felt most in metals and textiles, which still head the list of Dominican imports, although in recent years their ratio to industrial goods has dwindled. Santo Domingo is now importing more heavy machinery, machine tools, pharmaceuticals, and chemicals than ever before, a sure indication of the increasing industrialization of the country. In fact, along with improvement in agricultural methods, the establishment of industries is a prime target of the administration.

Industrial development calls for capital, and Dominicans

want American investors. But investment money, whatever its nationality, is shy. Investors are like wild animals that come to the edge of the woods, and when you put out your hand to stroke them, dart back to cover. Also, the experience of American investors in some Latin American countries has not been altogether happy. In some cases they have been overtaxed, in others they have been expropriated, in still others they have been "muscled in on" by local *políticos.*

While nothing can be guaranteed in any country as to future policies, there is every reason to believe that Dominican hospitality to American investment will continue. Earnestly desirous of building its economy, the Republic is too wise to kill the goose by excessive taxation or expropriation.

Naturally, successful industries must be based upon the crops. Typical examples are the making of alcohol from molasses, chocolate from cacao, matting from palm fiber, by-products of coconuts, peanut oil, leather, mahogany, and lignum vitae products, and a great many more. To encourage investors, the government exempts them from import taxes on their equipment and from many other taxes for periods sometimes as long as twenty years.

There is virtually no mining. The early Spaniards found some gold and worked a few mines, but the deposits were not large. However, government officials hopefully eye discoveries made as late as 1948. Reports are at hand indicating the presence of deposits of gold, magnetic iron, nickel, chromium, manganese, and copper. Coal and lignite are also said to be present; one geologist estimates the coal supply to be between fifty and one hundred million tons.

The government has employed geologists to make this search. Their experience with the natives could very well account for the fact that for so many years no minerals have been found. Armed with samples, they traveled about the land, asking natives whether they had seen any such rock as they were carrying. Everywhere they received a negative reply. They found one place that indicated that iron existed in the back

country, but no farmer would go with them to search. Slowly the reason dawned upon them. Returning to the capital, they demanded, "Let us see your mining laws." Told that none existed, they requested that some be drawn up and passed, which was done. These laws protected private ownership of property. Armed with the new legislation, they went back. In one place they managed to find a willing guide, who cut a path through the bush with a machete, until the geologists came upon a sizable outcropping of iron. The owner of the land, who had timidly tagged along, now nervously asked, "If the government finds out there is metal on my property, won't they take it away from me?" Reassured that such was not the case, but that quite to the contrary the owner would share in the earnings, the farmer passed the word about among his neighbors, who led the way to various types of deposits that previously they had been afraid to mention.

This story of discovery, while joyfully embraced in government circles, is viewed with the strongest doubt by many American mining engineers, who have seen their sanguine search for minerals trail off into disillusionment. It is to be hoped, of course, that the experts have found what they claim, and that the Dominican Republic has ahead of her a mineral as well as an agricultural economy.

Today, mining is restricted to the enormous salt working in Barahona, said to be the largest salt deposit in the world, with seventy-five million tons easily accessible.

There are no mahogany plantations because private capital cannot take an interest in something that requires one hundred years to pay off an investment. Plantations require a long-range view that only government can afford. Therefore the administration plans to start a mahogany plantation to increase the supply of this precious wood, so situated as to make cutting and shipping easy.

Even the most cursory glance at Dominican economy reveals that, like that of practically all Caribbean areas, it is substantially bolstered by tourism. The Dominican Republic has a

great deal to attract the tourist, and is making the most of that pleasant fact. Historically it is unique in being the footstool of Columbus, the land he found and loved. It is highly fortunate that the devastating hurricane of 1930, which leveled the capital, did not damage the solidly built ruins dating from Columbian days. They remain a magnet for visitors. There is, too, especially in the capital, a marriage of the old and new that delights the alien eye. Spotless modernity dwells beside picturesque antiquity, and in these latitudes it is the cleanliness that evokes comment.

It is not suggested that tourism offers the American investor an opportunity, since the government maintains control of the hotels, but some of the corollaries of the tourist trade undoubtedly do. For example, there is a startling dearth of native handiwork for the tourist to bring home, and most of that is servile copying of the creations of other lands. There must surely be enough native inspiration for intelligent direction and promotion to produce handicrafts essentially Dominican.

There is also the enormous yield of fruit, which is largely unexploited. The government now is giving substantial aid to a corporation to make flavoring sirups from native fruits. The Republic consumes some twenty million bottles of soft drinks annually, yet the sirups, along with the carbon dioxide and the bottles, are all imported; the country supplies only the water and the labor. In line with this, construction of a native plant to can fruits and make jams, jellies, and preserves is also in motion. It is hoped that an end will soon be put to the uneconomic practice of Dominicans importing their jams while their own fruits rot on the ground.

Strangely, there seems to be little hope for a fishing industry. With such a coast line, and with such a wealth of fish in the Caribbean, this seems odd. However, while there is enough fishing to satisfy sportsmen, who certainly have no cause to complain, the water is too deep for the fish to school and feed, so that they are not present in coastal waters in sufficient numbers to sustain a fishing industry.

The first enterprising American who establishes a neon-sign plant in Ciudad Trujillo should make a very nice thing indeed of it. Both manufacturers and merchants love neon signs, as demonstrated by their presence everywhere. Yet they are badly designed and built, for the most part, and they are all imported. The leading cities of the country could keep a neon plant going to capacity with manufacture and repairs.

What it boils down to is that the investment opportunities in the Dominican Republic are numerous and inviting, so long as they are integrated with the country's economy. Here is a ready market, made up of people living on a higher economic scale than one usually finds in Latin America. Here is an agreeable labor situation, in which union leaders, while doing their utmost for their constituents, appreciate that capital is entitled to a reasonable profit, and bargain without truculence or organized slowdowns. Here is a stable government operating under a sound economy, eager to aid new capital to get a start and guaranteeing, so far as any government on earth can guarantee its future course, complete and ready co-operation.

There is yet another possibility for persons of means who are not seeking investment. Some Americans, wishing to escape the crowded conditions and other objectionable aspects of our own holiday centers, have built permanent homes in the Dominican Republic. Surrounded by mountain grandeur or fronting the sparkling sea, they have found such peace and beauty that, fortified by the knowledge that they are only a few hours from the States, they regard Santo Domingo as home and could not be blasted out.

CHAPTER 34

THE MAN WITH A HOE

THE Dominican coat of arms should bear a hoe and a machete, for it is agriculture that turns the wheels. Well in excess of 80 per cent of the people directly owe their living to soil cultivation, while agricultural products account for virtually all the country's exports.

It therefore follows that any step toward greater productivity of crops contributes toward the national welfare. Since the middle 1930's enormous strides have been made. The government laid down three main objectives, within the framework of which all agricultural pursuits are encouraged. These primary aims are:

1. To grow *more* crops. Too often the Latin American is content to grow only enough for his own modest needs. His wantlessness is such that he has no incentive to produce for profit. The Dominican government, recognizing this, uses various means to spur the private farmer to greater production, so that after domestic demands have been met there will be a surplus for export.
2. To grow *better* crops. The widespread irrigation system for rice and, in the Barahona area, for sugar, is one method. The establishment of genetic farms, notably in coffee, is another. Qualified government representatives, who have spent their lives in trying to improve certain strains, consult with farmers, supply them with specially grown shoots, and give all possible assistance toward the elevation of crop standards.
3. To *diversify* the crops. The Dominicans, like other Carib-

bean peoples, have learned what it means to have a depression in a one-crop economy. They are determined to avoid the pitfalls of the commonly accepted produce of their part of the world, which consists of sugar, coffee, tobacco, and cacao. While they wish to continue and even increase production of these commodities, they have introduced rice, livestock, pineapples, and others. Thus they hope to cushion themselves against market glutting in any one line.

The principal agricultural products are sugar, coffee, cacao, pineapples, bananas, coconuts, yuca, plantain, rice, beans, corn, and other vegetables. There is also a surprisingly large number of cattle.

To accomplish its purpose the government uses several means, among which the irrigation program looms large. There are now about 100,000 acres irrigated, with a goal of 275,000 acres.

To encourage agrarian pursuits, the administration established a series of colonies, which, starting with three in 1926, now number about fifty. Of these, sixteen have been judiciously located along the Haitian border, not only to provide quickly available manpower but also to point up the contrast between the Dominican and the Haitian standards of living. Twenty of the colonies have irrigation for rice growing, but the rest rely upon a bountiful nature. These colonies occupy some 1,250,000 acres, of which approximately 720,000 acres are under cultivation, 490,000 being readied, and 40,000 available for settlement. Very favorable inducements are offered to settlers, including grants of land, monthly subsidies for the first year, draft animals, seeds, and farm equipment. The seeds are free; supplies are on lease. As an added incentive to settle along the frontier, those farmers gain full title to their land after eight years of occupation, while the others must work the farms for ten years to get possession. The total of colonists currently runs between 11,000 and 12,000. With their families they number about 55,000.

These measures work toward increase of volume. The program of improving quality involves such institutions as the genetic farms and the campaign to better the strain of livestock by breeding with imported cattle and horses. The Dominican cattle show strong strains of the zebu, or Brahma, which runs to greater weight and durability. Persuasive evidence of the success of the coffee-improvement program may be had simply by drinking a cup of the delicious coffee. Here is a most ingratiating brew, with a character of its own. Anything but a namby-pamby, it has strength without harshness, body without cloy. It is superb. As for cacao, the Sánchez bean has become known as the world's standard. The term "cacao," used throughout these discussions, has been chosen because it embraces the product regardless of the use to which it is put. The word "cocoa" automatically limits itself to the use of powdered cacao as a beverage, while "cacao" includes all disposals made of this very essential bean.

Diversification of products is achieved by the elementary process of taxation. That sugar supplies the lion's share of the government's income is attributable not alone to the fact that it is the largest crop the country produces, but also to the wise exemption from certain taxes of other commodities that serve to round out the over-all scheme. Thus farmers are encouraged to grow things that will emancipate Santo Domingo from the exigencies of market fortunes.

All these activities are under the supervision of the Secretariat of State for Agriculture, which is made up of seven divisions: forests, fishing and soil conservation, colonization, livestock, agricultural education, transportation, and the agricultural college.

Financing the private farmer is the function of the Banco Agrícola e Industrial. Founded in 1945 for the purpose of aiding the national farm program, it makes long-term loans to farmers at fairly low interest rates. This institution has been of tremendous benefit to the over-all agricultural scheme.

The government's agricultural program has paid off richly.

A notable approach to self-sufficiency has been made, and the total imports of essential foods have dipped sharply. With the huge increase in production of exportable commodities, Santo Domingo now has a very favorable balance of trade.

Carrying about 30 per cent of the total tax load of the country, sugar is the giant crop. It is grown on fourteen plantations, or *centrales*, all but four of which are American owned. The South Porto Rico Sugar Trading Corporation and the West Indies Sugar Corporation, operating seven centrals, account for about three quarters of the total output. There are one Canadian company and one Dominican.

Of the 800,000 acres operated by these fourteen companies, 300,000 are in cane, 200,000 in pasturage, and 300,000 in reserve for future development. It is to the credit of the Dominican sugar growers that, unlike their colleagues in some other countries, they have not pre-empted the best land. A published statement of the Dominican Sugar Producers' Association reads:

> In considering the outstanding contribution which the sugar industry has made to the Dominican economy, it is well to note that this accomplishment has not depended upon the exploitation of the best lands of the Dominican Republic.
>
> Approximately 85 per cent of the sugar production of the country comes from the eastern provinces, where, generally speaking, crops other than cane and grass cannot be grown to advantage. The great Central Valley, probably one of the most fertile areas on earth, is occupied in its entirety by skilled Dominican cultivators growing crops other than cane.
>
> The Dominican Republic is not a one-crop country, nor have its principal agricultural resources been exploited by the sugar industry. This is an unusual situation and is quite in contrast with conditions existing in most other sugar producing countries of the Caribbean area.

Not only does sugar growing take away no land that could be otherwise employed, but, except for the irrigated Barahona region, it relies upon rainfall for its water.

Production reaches an annual total of about 500,000 tons. Of this amount, all is raw sugar except some 11,000 tons of refined sugar, chiefly for domestic consumption. Additionally, the Dominican Republic uses about 50,000 tons of raw sugar. All the rest is for export, principally to Great Britain, as either sugar or molasses.

Workers are provided housing by the employer. Usually they live in *bateyes*, or compounds. The typical *batey* has a startlingly African look, with its collection of thatched huts of a shape we associate with kraals, its naked children, scampering animals, and almost incessant dust clouds whirling about its beaten earth. Each plantation operates a company store that sells to workers at prices ranging somewhat lower than those of the open market. However, workers pay cash for what they buy; there is none of that paternalism that extends credit beyond ability to pay, in order to keep employees in perpetual peonage.

Minimum-wage laws guarantee cane cutters at least sixty-five cents a ton, with a rock-bottom daily wage of $1.30. Cartmen get twenty cents a ton and car loaders five cents.

With a capital investment of about $150,000,000 in properties, the sugar industry employs forty thousand people and has an annual pay roll of $16,000,000. It also claims a world blue ribbon; the La Romana mill is said to be the largest single sugar mill in existence, with a world-record output of 178,653 tons of sugar ground in one season.

Unlike sugar, which is produced on large plantations owned by a handful of people, coffee is grown almost entirely by small farmers. These are the persons whom the government's land-parceling program is designed to help. It is small wonder that they are the darlings of the administration when one considers that the improvement of the product and the increase of its cul-

tivation rank very high indeed in Dominican economic plans.

Coffee production has doubled since 1930. Santo Domingo now produces about 2,000 tons of coffee a year, of which approximately two thirds are exported. Of this, the United States takes 75 per cent, the rest going to Puerto Rico and to Europe. In this country, Dominican coffee is not taken straight, as at home, but is used for blending. Revenues from coffee exports have already reached $5,000,000, a significant contribution to the country's financial health, and it is confidently expected that they will go much higher.

One of President Trujillo's first official acts upon his 1930 election to the presidency was to establish a Commission for the Defense of Coffee and Cacao, charged with promotion of both these commodities. Now the commission employs thirty inspectors who aid the farmers, not only by encouraging higher yield, but also by improving the strain. Samples of coffee intended for export are sent to the commission, which roasts, grinds, and brews the coffee and submits it to trained tasters. Rejected batches are not permitted to be exported.

Another great boon to the coffee grower has been the introduction of washing machines, given by the government to those who cannot buy them. Before 1930, not more than one fifth of the Dominican coffee shipped to the United States was washed; now the washed portion is 95 per cent of the total. This means something when one observes that unwashed Dominican coffee sells in this country for $23 a hundredweight, while the washed coffee brings $29.

Every bag of coffee sold to United States buyers costs its seller a "contribution" of ten cents to the Pan American Coffee Bureau, an organization of coffee growers throughout Latin America that promotes a campaign to increase North American consumption of coffee.

Not only is the growing of coffee in the hands of Dominicans, but this applies also to the sales. There are ten large firms handling more than 95 per cent of the coffee exports, buying from the farmers through their agents. Of these, one

is Dutch while the other nine are Dominican. Coffee is a thriving industry employing twenty-five thousand people, with an exceptionally bright future.

The northeastern part of the country is the home of cacao. Most of the crop is shipped from the port of Sánchez, from which the Dominican cacao bean derives its name.

By far the lion's share of Dominican cacao exports is taken by the United States, the rest going to Holland. Total production runs to better than 100,000 tons annually, and cultivation accounts for more than 225,000 acres. For several seasons, growth has been hampered by unfavorable dry weather, yet each year sees an increase in output and betterment in the bean.

There are two crops a year, in the spring and in the winter. The former is harvested between March and July, and the latter in December. Cacao grows in the form of a fruit, in size and shape very much like one of those pointed Edam cheeses. When ripe, the skin turns a dark red. Cut one open and you will find the beans, purple in color, nested in a white, custard-like substance. The fruit is similar to the papaw, except for its color and its fruity aftertaste. It is delicious, yet one sees virtually no Dominicans who even know it is edible.

Not only has the entire output been greatly increased since the early thirties, but yield per acre has been stepped up from about 150 pounds to 600 pounds. That the quality has also been vastly improved is evident from the fact that, whereas in 1925 8 per cent of the Dominican cacao sent to the United States was rejected as moldy or dry, that figure is now down to one half of one per cent.

Because of prevailing high prices for the cacao bean, there has been little or no production of chocolate in Santo Domingo. Now, however, a factory started by private enterprise and later acquired by the government is making chocolate in large bars for use in making chocolate candies, and hopes soon to be turning out 15,000 tons a year.

Up to 1930, Dominicans imported a large part of the rice they ate. In that year—the year when the wheels began humming in every phase of national effort—domestic rice cultivation was started, and by 1940 Santo Domingo was a rice-exporting country.

To accomplish this, the huge irrigation project was undertaken to which reference was made earlier, and it is still in progress. Through it the government hopes to make the Dominican Republic the granary of the West Indies. That such a position would require a lot of rice is established by the fact that the average Dominican consumes some sixty pounds of rice a year, and his Caribbean neighbors maintain about the same level.

From 91,000 acres in 1939, rice growing now takes about 120,000 acres, a large part of which is concentrated in the Monte Cristi region of the northwest, along the Haitian border. Here the irrigation network is densest and the colonizing program most active. This accounts for roughly 40 per cent of the total. About the same percentage is to be found around San Francisco de Macorís, where less irrigation is needed. The rest is scattered throughout the country on small farms.

Today the yield is about 50,000 tons yearly. However, an ambitious government project to reclaim about 300,000 acres in the delta area of the Yuna River, in the northeastern state of Samaná, will increase production by 100,000 tons a year. This program will take about five years.

To most North Americans, who think of all Latin America as producing bananas in wild profusion, it may come as a surprise that the Dominican government is doing its utmost to encourage banana production, by offering interest-free loans to farmers to start plantations.

Until World War II, banana experts rose steadily year by year, but the wartime shortage of freighters and the need for more win-the-war cargoes curtailed production. Since the war

the amount shipped has again risen to a level of about one million bunches annually.

By far the largest producer is the United Fruit Company, which operates the most modern plantations in the northwest part of the country, shipping out of Puerto Libertador. Reputedly the only foreign banana organization to own Dominican land, United Fruit, through its subsidiary, The Granada Company, has been growing there since 1943. It employs about eight thousand people and has extensive overhead spraying systems and fully mechanized handling. Nearly 120,000 acres are held by the company.

Dominican laws to conserve timber have teeth. It is unlawful to cut trees in any of the mountains, along rivers, beside lakes, and in other places specifically named. Before any hardwood tree may be felled, a government permit must be issued. To obtain this permit, the would-be cutter must actually produce five, or ten, or up to twenty seedlings of the same kind of tree, depending upon its kind and size. Santo Domingo does not intend to be denuded of trees.

To enforce timber conservation the government has about fifty agents in various parts of the country. These men not only report violations but also hold meetings with farmers to explain the laws and review previous misdemeanors. They regularly patrol wooded sections to prevent unwarranted cutting.

Exports of sawn woods are in the neighborhood of 20,000,000 cubic feet, or from 3 to 5 per cent of the whole output. The principal woods shipped out are mahogany, lignum vitae, and pine.

Taking the annual export totals of the four principal commodities, the figures run roughly as follows: crude sugar, fifty million dollars; cacao, thirteen millions; tobacco, five millions; coffee, four to five millions. Thus these four crops obviously make important contributions to total exports, which reach about eighty-two million dollars.

There is brisk business in pineapples, coconuts, peanuts, yuca, plantain, and the others mentioned, but little need to detail their growing methods. An over-all view convinces the most casual observer that the administration has adopted a sound program and has aggressively pushed it. It has done more than anything else to raise the wages and the living standard of the average Dominican. The man with a hoe is better off than ever in his history.

Conclusion

CHAPTER 35

THE NEED FOR UNDERSTANDING

ANY American sincerely desiring to understand and appreciate the Dominican Republic, or any other Latin American country, will do well to discard his preconceived notions and examine that nation in the light of its history, its culture, its social and political aims, and its success in achieving those objectives. The most fruitless and foolish method is to try to fit other peoples into a prefabricated mold labeled "made in U.S.A." and then damn them if they don't slip in easily. They are not like us and they never will be like us; why then do we insist that they must behave like us?

This insistence upon conformity, while not exclusively American, finds its loudest expression in our country. So thoroughly persuaded are we that our way is best that we view with profound distrust any who venture to suggest that there is another way. It is especially in the field of politics that we attempt to thrust our thinking upon others, without regard for the aptness of its application or their ability or willingness to accept it.

Let no one construe anything written here as a defense of dictatorship, which is repugnant to all who firmly believe in representative government. This book is written with unswerving faith in what we loosely call democracy, by which most of us mean republicanism. It is scrupulously free of propaganda. Yet there are certain unpleasant realities that Americans must face if they are ever to penetrate the Latin American mind and spiritually achieve anything resembling true hemispheric solidarity.

The first concerns democracy. If democracy were demonstrably perfect, every nation in the world would have it. The

very fact that we must work so hard to promote it implies unwelcome features. We forget that democracy is an adult political concept, suited only to countries with a high level of general education and conditioned by custom and tradition to accept the responsibilities of self-government along with its privileges. We fail to remember that our own Anglo-Saxon heritage includes Britain's greatest contribution to the world, the development of government by the governed. The colossal upheavals that produced the English parliament and Magna Carta are well behind us; when our country was founded, the establishment of the people's sovereignty had already been firmly accomplished.

No such historical aid to representative government is to be found in the Spanish culture, nor the Indian, nor the Negro. Latin America is fighting now for what was laid in our cradle. Isn't it presumptuous of us to offer in a glittering showcase this cake that was baked before our nation existed, and to which we have added important ingredients and an icing palatable to us, and expect it to be eaten and enjoyed by people not yet ready to digest it? In due time all Latin America will operate smoothly under the system we now advocate, but not without turmoil and struggle. Meanwhile, it behooves us to give much more sympathetic attention to the aspirations of our neighbors, rather than to their shortcomings, and to show by the force of our own good example that democracy really works—a form of selling democracy not assiduously practiced. No service we could render to Latin American adherents of democracy could be half so potent as a convincing demonstration of our system's excellence at home.

Another unpleasant fact we must face is that we are abysmally ignorant about Latin America. Worse than that, we are unaware of our own ignorance. We dismiss all other American nations as "banana republics" and amusedly regard their struggles as *opéra bouffe*. We lump them together, blandly assuming that one is just like another—including even Brazil, a country that speaks a different language from all the rest, and

is considerably larger than the United States. We invest them with a Graustarkian unreality, and we display, not only a lack of knowledge, but a much more stultifying lack of interest. Yet it is obvious that if the Good Neighbor Policy is to endure as anything more than an instrument for top-level bargaining, if it is to have flesh-and-blood vitality, it must stem from the peoples involved. Excluding colonies and territories, there are ten republics in Central America and ten in South America. The average United States citizen, far from understanding these countries, cannot even name them. How then can we expect to sympathize with their individual needs and aspirations?

Considering this intellectual vacuity with regard to our neighbors, therefore, let us not assume that we have worked out all the problems pertaining to government, and that others have only to follow our prescription to find idyllic happiness. Let us lay aside the indolence that makes us catalogue and pigeonhole people and regimes, and question the wisdom of radio rabblerousers when they indiscriminately throw out words like "dictator" and "tyrant," understanding as little of the background as we ourselves do. Specifically, let us consider the Dominican Republic dispassionately, without trying to make it fit preconceived ideas, and give due weight to the forces that have joined to make it what it is.

It would be difficult indeed to find in the Americas a nation that has endured more agony, more fiendish, insensate slaughter. The Dominicans not only had to win their independence from Spain, but also to rid their land more than once of the Haitian invader. To this day the memory of these death struggles colors Dominican foreign policy. We do not consider it odd that France is ever chary of German aggression; the same applies to Santo Domingo, with the same historic right to chariness. The actual border dispute between Santo Domingo and Haiti came to an end with the treaty signed on February 27, 1935, which provided for the construction of an international highway and the colonization of a strip ten kilometers wide

along the entire frontier. There is occasional saber rattling between these occupants of the same island, but it is to be suspected that such martial shows are usually staged to distract public attention from distasteful domestic policies, a form of "misdirection," as the magicians call it, familiar enough in our own country.

In her dealings with other American nations, the Dominican Republic has not hung back from the promotion of hemispheric unity. Jointly with Colombia, Dominican representatives worked out the plan for the formation of an entity that would assume responsibility for creating a permanent American union of states, and these proposals were adopted at the Chapultepec Conference. Also, as has been observed, the Dominican Republic led all Latin America in declaring war upon the Axis.

There are occasional tiffs with neighbors, caused primarily by the fluctuating success of expatriate Dominican dissidents in arousing anti-Trujillo sentiment. It is only to be expected, also, that the Trujillo government morally supports regimes like its own and verbally lashes those that lean to the left, a policy that has bred trouble with Venezuela and Costa Rica, among others.

The country's recognition of national duty in world-wide problems was nowhere more clearly demonstrated than in the really generous offer to take as many as one hundred thousand refugees from oppressed lands and to give these people a chance at reconstruction and forgetfulness of a shattering experience. Solely on a basis of population pressure, Santo Domingo was by no means the most logical place; areas like, say, Brazil or Texas have far fewer people to the square mile. Yet the Trujillo government did not hesitate to extend haven, a gesture that will live in the history of the Jewish people.

This is not an isolated example. During the Spanish Civil War, when the Falangists (politically Trujillo's blood brothers) were slaughtering many innocent persons in Madrid, Trujillo instructed the Dominican legation in that capital to take un-

der its diplomatic immunity the women, children, and aged who were being oppressed, extending to the entire noncombatant population the rights traditionally recognized for political refugees. During the same conflict, some five thousand Republican refugees from Spain were admitted to Dominican hospitality, some of whom are still repaying this kindness by teaching in the university.

Therefore, although the 1937 Haitian incident is certainly not to be condoned, in view of such patently humanitarian moves as those just mentioned no thoughtful person can dismiss Trujillo simply as a butcher, as some writers have attempted to do.

To the question "is Trujillo a dictator?" one must answer both yes and no. The answers hinge upon the definition of a dictator.

There can be no faintest question that he holds office with popular approval. We are all too familiar with the mercurial Latin American and his love of direct political action to think that an unpopular Trujillo would remain in office for long. Either the military would rise and take over, or an assassin would dispose of him, or one of his arch foes would raise a force and unseat him. The mere fact that he has held office over a long period means nothing, unless we are willing to call our own government from 1933 to 1945 a dictatorship because the same man headed it.

However, the existence of only one political party is not easy for a lover of liberty to accept. True enough, Trujillo has invited his exiled enemies to return and run for office against him, establishing their own parties. That they have not taken up the challenge may indicate their distrust of his sincerity, but it also indicates their complete lack of confidence in their ability to beat him in a free election, and a similar faintheartedness among any potential financial backers. Meanwhile, the Dominican party goes on, working just as hard between elections as during a campaign to consolidate the position of the Benefactor. In the sense that he has no strong, unhampered oppo-

sition, and that therefore elections cannot be called wholly free, he must be regarded as what we call a dictator.

There is also the matter of the controlled press, coupled with censorship of critical articles in foreign publications. Let an American magazine fulminate against Trujillo, and you won't find copies of that issue on sale in the Dominican Republic.

In these two respects, free elections and free press, Trujillo fits the concept of the traditional strong man. There are, however, sharp departures from the Hitler-Mussolini-Stalin pattern.

Accepted dictatorial technique calls for a division of the populace, a setting of class against class, so that rule by dividing may be accomplished. None of that exists under Trujillo. He persecutes no class, no race. He inflames no Dominican group against another. Industrialist and peasant farmer, white and black, agree that he is the man for the job.

Another democratic feature is his devotion to general education, the nemesis of dictatorship. The Trujillo regime spends 17 per cent of its total budget for educational purposes. In a country of slightly fewer than two million people, the maintenance of some twenty-six hundred primary, secondary, and vocational schools, with an enrollment five times as great as in 1930, is hardly calculated to keep the populace in an ignorantly docile state. Trujillo sincerely regards his own administration and others like it as a stopgap, pending the raising of the national level of education to a point that will make intelligent self-rule possible.

It is almost axiomatic that a dictator cherishes a cynical contempt for the masses, and laughingly shrugs off the notion that government is the servant, not the master, of the people. Yet here is a head of state who encourages every citizen with a real grievance to make direct contact with him. The mail brings thousands of letters from humble folk. Some want money for a new cow, others ask for land, yet others seek medi-

cal aid. While many of these letters are turned over to the Dominican party or territorial officials for attention, a not inconsiderable number receives the President's personal notice. This is especially true in the case of complaints against local administrations. When an official of the government or the police is accused of abuse of his powers, an immediate investigation is begun. Evidence of an official's throwing his weight around brings instant dismissal and punishment. Hitler's petty officialdom battened on the benign protection of the Nazi party; Trujillo's local representatives are not permitted to lord it over the people they were named to serve. Here is a wide gulf between what we have always associated with sawdust Caesars and what goes on under Trujillo.

Thus the picture of Trujillo the Dictator is knocked out of sharp focus. There are too many contradictory elements for anyone to say categorically that his is an iron-handed rule. The visitor may find the general adulation and the scarcity of personal criticism disturbing. Yet there are no concentration camps, no expansionist aims, no tyranny by individuals or party, no native underground working for his elimination. It is impossible to give an unequivocal answer to the question of whether he is or is not a dictator.

This much is sure. Judged by any standards of material progress, he has been a godsend to his country. No impartial observer can help admiring the man's tremendous energy, ability, and patriotism. Under his administration there is less loss of human dignity than that suffered by certain American minorities, and a great deal more social equality. Even the Dominicans of superior education and means, while ruefully recognizing the sacrifice of many democratic forms, agree that both their own class and the poor are far better off than if the unhampered ballot were in the hands of the vast majority, largely unlettered Negroes, who would chase political will-o'-the-wisps over the precipice. However repellent this notion may be to those of us who stanchly believe in democracy, it

fits today's practical needs of the Dominican people, who are entitled to the final word about the operation of their own country.

What is it that we object to most about fascism or communism? Is it that such ideas prevail in certain sections of the world? Or is it rather that the vendors of these totalitarian ideas try to peddle their wares in the United States? Honesty compels the confession that most of us are largely unmoved by the slave-labor camps existing in Soviet Russia. That is a matter of internal Soviet policy, we say, and while it is horrible it is nothing against which we are prepared to fight. We dismiss it with a shudder and a crocodile tear. What really exercises us is that Soviet agents are at work in the United States, either openly or through numerous "front" organizations, to accomplish the downfall of our form of government. This we resent, and very justifiably so. The Russian people, we maintain, are entitled to whatever form of government they prefer, even though it is one with which we can never be in sympathy, *but let them keep it at home.* It does not fit our temperament, our institutions, our economy. We correctly consider it a weakness of communism that its champions feel it cannot succeed unless all the world accepts it.

Neither Trujillo nor any other Dominican has the faintest desire to impose his form of government upon any other people. If it is dictatorship, it is dictatorship for Santo Domingo exclusively. That in itself points the striking difference between Trujillo on the one hand and Stalin, Hitler, and Mussolini on the other. And don't forget that we accepted Mussolini and to a considerable extent admired his administration of Italian affairs until he joined the Axis to attempt world domination.

Wiping the scowl of righteous indignation from our faces, we turn them toward Latin America wreathed in smiles. Democracy, we tell our southern neighbors, is the universal government, the only one under which mankind can happily progress. We do precisely what the Soviet supporters do here, when we disregard the background of Latin American nations

and the state of their preparedness for democracy, and insist that they swallow at one herculean gulp what has been fed to us with a medicine dropper. There is one great distinction between our methods of persuasion and those of the Reds. We have the money and the markets to set our demands in italic type.

These are harsh words, but they are voiced because of a firm belief that one of the speediest ways to lose what we have is to lie to ourselves. We like to read and hear that we are the champions of freedom and right. We think that every other nation both envies and loves us, a combination of attitudes never yet found in anybody. This passion for self-delusion led us during World War II to call both China and Soviet Russia democracies, simply because they were joined with us in a fight against a common enemy. Isn't it time we strove for realism and maturity in our international relations? During World War I we fought for "self-determination of small nations." Unless we want to inherit the Habsburg-Hohenzollern mantle, should we not grant the small nations of our own hemisphere the same rights that we bled to win for small Balkan countries?

We quarrel with Argentina because her form of government is dictatorial. Is there anybody who sincerely believes that our position is not also determined by economic considerations? If it is not, why don't we include Trujillo, and Somoza of Nicaragua? Argentina is a leader in Latin America, while the Dominican Republic and Nicaragua are small. Argentina's economy competes with ours; that of the others does not. What really matters to us is that the two Central American governments are firmly tied to our orbit.

This is especially true of Santo Domingo. The emissaries of Spain continually try to orient the Dominican Republic toward Madrid, with conspicuous lack of success. The sentimental ties are there—language, history, and culture all call the Dominicans back to the mother country. Yet their enthusiasm is reserved for the United States. That is literally true; nowhere in this hemisphere will you find more genuine admiration of

Americans or more determination to emulate them. The private Dominican citizen, with no idea of what happens to the produce he grows or the tortoise shell he carves, wants to know all he can about that fabulous land to the north and hopes one day to visit it. This is rather strange when one remembers the American occupation and customs control—but then one realizes how short are our memories and how swiftly international patterns change.

This pro-Americanism of the Dominican man on the street is a tremendous asset to us. It is infinitely more important than the form of administration under which he lives. It is the wellspring of those qualities that make the Dominican Republic a good customer, a cheerful supplier, a warmhearted host, and a stanch friend of the United States.

One of the best summations of the country's attitude toward Trujillo was the remark of the successful and prosperous businessman of the capital who said, "If you had a business and it was always in the red and you got a new manager and he put it in the black would you fire him?"

For nearly a hundred years the Dominican Republic was backward, poor, head-over-heels in debt, torn by revolution and bloodshed, filled with disorder, waste, and corruption. In less than twenty years it has become prosperous, orderly, progressive, and wealthy, with a vigorous, honestly conducted public administration and a deep national pride in achievement. You can't laugh that off with the reckless assertion that the man who wrought the transformation is a dictator.

Monte Cristi
Isabela
Puerto Plata
Sosua
CORDILLERA SEPTENTRIONAL
Río Yaque del Norte
Santiago
Moca
CORDILLERA CENTRAL
La Vega
Jarabacoa
Rincon
Constanza
Monseñor Nouel
San Juan
DOMINICAN
SEIRRA DE NEIBA
Lake Enriquillo
Neiba
Río Yaque del Sur
Azua
Jimaní
Duverge
Las Salinas
Barahona
Puerto Hermoso
SIERRA DE BAHORUCO
CARIB
Cape Beata

FLORIDA
THE BAHAMAS
CUBA
JAMAICA
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC
HAITI
HARTMN
ATLANTIC
Villa Julia Molina
Sanchez
Samana
Samana Bay
Rio Yuna
Sabana de le Mar
Rio Ozama
San Geronimo
Seibo
Macao
REPUBLIC
CIUDAD TRUJILLO
Boca Chica
San Pedro de Macoris
SEA
0 MILES 50
Paved Roads

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